

Beirut court studies deputies' petition

BEIRUT (R) — Beirut's constitutional court met on Saturday to discuss a secret report on a petition lodged by opposition parliamentary deputies to cancel a controversial election law. The 10-member constitutional council went into session behind closed doors to discuss the report submitted by a special reporter it appointed during its first session last Tuesday. Journalists were ordered to leave the meeting. The court had declared the petition legal in form and said it would meet again to discuss its basis in light of the recommendation by the special unnamed reporter. The petition, signed by 10 deputies — six Christians and four Muslim leftists — to cancel the law passed by parliament last month — argues the law violates the constitutional principle of equality for all citizens. If the court rules against the law, parliamentary elections due to begin on August 18 would be cancelled.

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King, Assad hold 'very positive' talks

HM describes Damascus summit as opportunity for reconciliation and discussion of all issues

King says he is not carrying any Syrian message for Netanyahu

By Mervat Suwadeh with agency dispatches

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday described as very successful talks he held in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and said Syria was committed to Middle East peace.

Talking to reporters upon his return home from the Syrian capital after the talks, the King also said the visit was an "opportunity for reconciliation and openness on many issues, in fact all issues," between Jordan and Syria. It was the King's first visit to Syria after Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty in October 1994 but his second meeting with President Assad since then. The two leaders met on the fringes of the Arab summit held in Cairo in June.

"It was a successful visit with all the meaning of the word," the King said. The King said his talks with the Syrian president dealt with the peace process, bilateral ties and inter-Arab relations. He said the meeting was "very positive" and that he was "very comfortable" with the visit.

The King's visit to Syria was widely seen as a Jordanian effort to break the stalemate in Syrian-Israeli negotiations, but the King said he did not carry "any message" from the Syrian president to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is due here on Monday.

"President Assad did not give me any message to pass on to the Israeli prime minister. But he knows that when he wants I am willing to serve the cause of comprehensive and just peace," the King said.

He also declined to unveil Syria's "response" to Israel's "Lebanon-first" option which Damascus has publicly refused.

"We discussed all issues but I cannot talk now and I do not think I have the right to speak about this issue," he said.

However, the King said he felt that President Assad remained committed to peace.

"I gave him my first impression regarding the recent changes and again, I felt his commitment to a just, comprehensive and fair peace," the King said when asked if he felt any change in Syria's peace position after the victory of Mr. Netanyahu in May elections.

King Hussein was accompanied during the visit by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Minister of Information Marwan Muasher and Water Minister Samir Kassar. Syrian Vice-presidents Abdul Halim Khaddam and Zuhair Masharka also took part in the talks.

Under Mr. Netanyahu's "Lebanon-first" option Israel and Syria would break the six-month deadlock in their peace negotiations by agreeing on a settlement in Lebanon where both countries have troops. Mr. Netanyahu is expected to raise his proposal when he meets with King Hussein this week during his first visit to the Kingdom since he took office in June, a Jordanian official said.

Reports from Tel Aviv suggested Friday that Mr. Netanyahu requested King Hussein to mediate with the Syrians when the two leaders met secretly in London. But the Royal Court here denied that such a meeting took place.

Israeli army radio said late Thursday that Mr. Netanyahu had met the King in London last week but gave no other details.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Mr. Netanyahu had left Israel last Friday for

an unknown destination.

Among other issues, the King discussed with President Assad attempted terrorist attacks against Jordan by Syrian-based groups. The King had given Mr. Assad during the Arab summit in Cairo a file that included details of 36 foiled attempts organised by Syrian-based groups against Jordan.

Asked whether the two countries would take "practical measures" to prevent similar attempts the King said: "We discussed all issues, and there is coordination between the two countries on all levels and in various fields."

Jordanian officials said recently that Syria had taken "positive steps" by arresting about 10 suspects in the plots against Jordan.

In Damascus, a spokesman for President Assad said the three-hour meeting with the King focused on "obstacles created by the Israeli government" to a comprehensive Middle East peace agreement.

Official Syrian radio on Saturday again rejected Mr. Netanyahu's "Lebanon-first" proposal, saying it was an attempt to "sow divisions between Syria and Lebanon."

Syrian political sources quoted by AFP said that President Assad wants a "clear Israeli commitment" to withdraw from the Golan Heights, which the Jewish state seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war.

An official Syrian daily warned Saturday that Israel had issued a "declaration of war on the peace process" with its decision to ease restrictions on expanding existing Jewish settlements.

"It sabotages all international efforts and violates the U.N. resolutions and the principle of land-for-peace," Tishrin said.



Syrian President Hafez Al Assad embraces His Majesty King Hussein upon the Monarch's arrival at Damascus airport for a brief working visit on Saturday (Reuters photo)

Perry: U.S. forces in Gulf are alert against 'imminent' attack

U.S. official hints at Iranian role in Dhahran bombing, asserts militants want American forces out of region

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. forces in the Gulf are on the highest alert and commanders there have been instructed to prepare for an "imminent" terrorist attack, Defence Secretary William Perry said Saturday.

Mr. Perry said there was "a flood of intelligence, no one of which is clearly indicative of a specific attack at a specific place, but in the aggregate has caused us to raise our threat level in Saudi Arabia to the highest possible threat level."

"That threat level translates to an attack is imminent. That is the instruction under which all of our forces commanders there operate under: to prepare for an imminent terrorist attack," Mr. Perry told reporters.

Mr. Perry, who met with reporters about his trip this

week to the Gulf, backed away from a statement Friday in which he suggested that a Saudi investigation would find an "international connection," possibly Iran, was behind a terrorist bombing in Dhahran that killed 19 Americans.

Mr. Perry said he did not know what the Saudi investigators would conclude, and based his expectation of an international connection on the complexity of the bombing and the terrorists' use of military explosives and detonators.

Mr. Perry told reporters he was only quoting Iran's own statements when he said on Friday that Iran was a leading candidate for international terrorism against the United States, adding: "to tie it to any imminent action is just not warranted at all."

When asked if his Friday comments on Iran, coupled

with a new report that Iran had terrorist training camps, meant the United States might strike, Mr. Perry said that was a classic case of adding two and two and getting twenty two.

Saying he welcomed a chance to clarify his Friday comments, Mr. Perry said he only repeated Iran's own threat to support terrorism against U.S. forces and repeated his conclusion that the sophistication of the Saudi bombing indicated "an international terrorist connection."

Mr. Perry said he did not know if Saudi Arabia would shortly announce its findings on the June 25 truck bombing and said that during his recent trip there: "I learned nothing new about who was responsible for the bombing."

He said U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia are on higher alert.

PNA court jails three policemen for torture death of prisoner

Hamas urges increased attacks

NABLUS (Agencies) — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) on Saturday jailed three policemen for torturing a prisoner to death and formed a committee to look into the killing of a demonstrator in the West Bank.

However, the militant Hamas organisation called for an uprising against the PNA and called for attacks on "Zionist targets" to avenge the two deaths.

A Jericho military court found three PNA police officers guilty of torturing to death 26-year-old Mahmoud Jemayel in a Nablus jail.

Jemayel died last Wednesday night after he was tortured by naval police. Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, who ordered the trial in an attempt to soothe growing tensions in the West Bank, said Jemayel would be considered a Palestinian "martyr" — a

term usually given to those killed by Israeli repression.

The Jericho court sentenced Captain Abdul Hakim Hijo an Lieutenant Omar Kaddoumi to 15 years plus hard labour for the killing. Sergeant Ahmad Biddo received a 10-year jail term plus hard labour.

Palestinian human rights activists have denounced the trial, which lasted for about two hours, as a mockery.

"The Palestinian Authority is trying to escape responsibility for its actions by holding speedy trials," said human rights activist Khader Shieqr. Tensions rose in the West Bank after Jemayel's death and on Friday Palestinian police shot dead a demonstrator during clashes at a prison in the town of Tulkarim.

(Continued on page 7)

Aideed's faction spurns Ali Mahdi's peace offer

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Followers of the late Somali faction leader Mohammad Farah Aideed on Saturday spurned an offer of peace talks from his arch-enemy.

"Interior minister" Mohammad Kanyare Afrah said a successor to Aideed, declared president of Somalia by supporters in June last year, would be chosen within seven days of his death by his council of ministers and his alliance's leadership council.

"We will continue the policies of the interim government... We will stand as he stood," Mr. Kanyare told Reuters at his residence in war-battered and sand-swept southern Mogadishu.

"If anyone wants to talk to us as a government we will talk to them as faction leaders or as individuals. We will never accept someone calling us faction leaders... That's an abuse."

Ali Mahdi Mohammad, Aideed's arch foe who is now the single most powerful politician and clan militia alliance leader in Somalia, called on Friday for talks between all factions and an internationally funded conference to end six years of war.

But Mr. Ali Mahdi refuses, like the international community except for Sudan and

Libya, to recognise Aideed's "government."

Mr. Ali Mahdi also said his own fighters would observe a unilateral ceasefire, unless they were attacked. Mr. Kanyare said Aideed's forces never started shooting and were always attacked so the north Mogadishu leader's promise meant nothing.

Mogadishu has been unusually quiet since Aideed's death on Thursday, with supporters in his southern fiefdom mourning their hero while enemies struggle to mask their glee at his death.

Mr. Kanyare said any Somali could apply to be elected president but he believed no candidates had yet put their names forward. He said Aideed's death would not change the government thrust.

"We will never, never, never stop continuing to implement government policies to return to the rule of law and respect for human rights," the Murusade sub-clan militia chief said.

Asked how he could say such policies had helped Somalia after civil war since 1991 and hundreds of thousands of dead, Mr. Kanyare said: "It is better than for us to be colonised."

(Continued on page 7)

Opposition vows heated battle over proposed hike in bread prices

Prime minister says government ready to face confidence vote during extraordinary Parliament session

By Tareq Momani Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Opposition members of Parliament have strongly rejected the government's plan to increase the price of bread and threatened to call for a vote of no-confidence in the government if it went ahead with its plan.

The opposition's stand was reasserted by several Parliament members on the eve of Sunday's Parliament meeting, which is to convene upon the request of 41 deputies to debate the government's decision.

Government sources, however, stressed that the plan, which, officials say, was taken to help the country become self-reliant, will inevitably be carried out despite the protests.

Bassam Emoush, member of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party in Parliament, told the Jordan Times: "We will refute the government's claims that there is no alternative to meeting the deficit in the fiscal budget except through increasing prices."

"Sunday's session will enable the public to discover the true stands of the deputies in terms of supporting or rejecting the government's plan," said Dr. Emoush. He asserted that deputies who refrain from speaking during the session means they "implicitly approve of the government's plan" and that their silence "will be an attempt to escape from the problem."

"If the government fails to respond to the demands

of Parliament and the Jordanian public and goes ahead with its plan, we will seek a vote of no-confidence in the government," added Dr. Emoush.

Under the Constitution, Parliament cannot move a motion of no-confidence in the government during an extraordinary session because only topics on the agenda in the Royal decree summoning Parliament for the session can be debated.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti has repeatedly stressed that the plan to raise the price of bread was a national decision and that no Jordanian citizen will be affected by the floating of the price. He has also emphasised that the government was not removing the subsidy on bread but substituting one

method with another.

The prime minister had said that the rechanneling of the bread subsidy will secure an additional income to the people once international wheat prices go down because the compensation to be paid to offset the increase will be maintained and in case the prices went up again the government will introduce further increases in the compensation.

"I am exercising my powers as prime minister under the Constitution and the Parliament has the right to exercise its rights by voting confidence in the government if the deputies are not convinced by the government's views," according to Mr. Kabariti.

"The government is even ready to seek a Royal

decree adding to the agenda of the extraordinary session the right for deputies to cast a vote of confidence in the government," he said.

"Should the government continue to provide the subsidy on bread in its present form, the country will eventually resort to more borrowing which would eventually lead to very serious consequences," warned the prime minister.

While the opposition continues to oppose the government's decision, it has to date failed to submit a practical alternative to the plan.

The government had said that it would pay JD 15 to each citizen annually to offset the difference in the price of bread, but would not be responsible for compensating an estimated

400,000 guest workers and an estimated 1.2 million tourists annually visiting Jordan (1996 figures).

Informed government sources told the Jordan Times that Mr. Kabariti will be open and frank in his address to Parliament Sunday, explaining the reasons behind the government's plan. The prime minister's address will be very important because it will shed light on the dangers inherent in maintaining the present form of bread subsidy, they said.

Centrist deputies said that the decision to increase bread prices is a serious one because it affects all public sectors.

"We are convinced by the government's justification for the move but we can only voice our objection to

the plan otherwise we will lose our popularity," added these deputies.

Asked about their stand in the event the opposition deputies moved a no-confidence motion in the government the deputies said: "We will cross the bridge when we reach it. The price is one thing and a confidence vote is something else."

Representatives of the bedouin tribes in the central parts of Jordan protested the government's decision of last Thursday to increase the prices of animal feed saying that it will affect practically every citizen depending on livestock.

Saleh Al Fayed, a spokesman for the delegation which met with Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour told the Jordan

Times: "If the government goes ahead with its decision on the animal feed, the result will be a popular outburst."

"We will resort to all democratic methods and even confrontations if need be," he added.

He said that the government should hold the "corrupt" to account for their actions which led to Jordan falling in heavy debts rather than tamper with the people's basic food.

Mr. Fayed said that the people of the badia region suffer from poverty, hunger and unemployment and any increase in prices will lead to further complications in their life resulting eventually in an open outburst.

Uncertain but hopeful, Somalia enters new era

NAIROBI (R) — The death of General Mohammed Farah Aided, scourge of U.S. and U.N. peacekeepers, might help peace develop in devastated Somalia for the first time since 1991.

His death was announced on Friday, more than a week after he was hit by bullets on the front line in south Mogadishu in the clan fighting that his ruthless quest for power had largely engendered.

Somali analysts and diplomats following the anarchy of the Horn of Africa country said that with Aided off the stage his supporters and enemies could start serious negotiations.

"Hopefully there will now be a push for an accommodation between all the guys," one aid agency official said.

"For organisations such as the United Nations and European Union, his death certainly means the disappearance of the major bogeyman," said another senior aid worker.

An anti-Aided Somali intellectual in exile said the dead warlord's faction would not fall apart but was isolated.

"Most Somalis think he was the main obstacle to peace. A lot of people died because of him and lost everything because of him," he said.

But Aided's faction, the United Somali Congress (USC-SNA), is still very much alive. It appointed committees with 30 members to take charge on both the military and political fronts.

Aided's militiamen were ordered to remain in their positions until further orders. The 59-year-old general was revered by his partisans for ousting late dictator Mohammed Siad Barre in 1991, 1992 and for humbling the "imperialist" American and U.N. troops who tried and failed to whip Somalia into line in 1993 and 1994.

Aided spokesmen adopted their dead leader's rhetoric, accusing "foreign forces" of plotting his death.

His faction is still militarily the strongest single force among Somalia's myriad militias.

But his fighters aboard their "technical" battlewagons have been on the defensive since early April, slowly losing ground to the imposing coalition ranged against them.

Aided's kinsman and former financier, Osman Hassan Ali Ato, and his arch-enemy, Ali Mahdi Mohammed, have forged a military alliance with lesser faction leaders this year.

They seized parts of Aided's south Mogadishu stronghold, captured his airport and chipped away his control of the few areas outside the capital he took over after declaring himself president last year.

If the anti-Aided coalition survives his death, avoiding the classic Somali fate of collapsing once the common enemy has disappeared, diplomats say a genuine central power structure could emerge.

"Ato and Ali Mahdi are unlikely to react publicly until after his funeral," on Friday afternoon, a Western diplomat said.

"But his death can be a signal for peace, according to his opponents," he said in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, where foreign Somalia-watchers retreated after the last U.N. peacekeeping troops withdrew in March 1995.

"It could go either way but for sure the balance of forces will have dramatically shifted. In the best-case scenario it would mean a lot for aid agencies trying to help Somalis," an aid worker said.

Aided regarded most foreign relief agencies with deep suspicion and threatened them regularly. He believed they were in league with Western interests opposed to him.

Prince Mohammad becomes royal patron of British Staunton Society

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, has accepted an insignia presented on behalf of the British Staunton Society to commemorate his acceptance of the position of royal patron of the society.

Prince Mohammad expressed his appreciation at accepting the patronage saying that this was an expression of the strong relationship that binds both Jordan and the United Kingdom, the Jordan Information Bureau (JIB) in London said in a statement.

Barry Martin, the honourable secretary of the society, said that Staunton sought Hashemite patronage to augment the cultural attachment, through chess, between the two countries and in recognition of Arab and Muslim contribution to chess, especially for their effort to introduce it to Europe via the Iberian peninsula, the JIB statement said.

The insignia, presented to Prince Mohammad on Dec. 31, incorporates Jordan's coat of arms, the Staunton's Society symbols and Simpson-in-the-Strand coat of arms, the home of British chess.

It was designed by Robert Parsons, of the City of London School of Heraldry and was signed by various officials of the society.

The presentation was held at the Jordanian embassy in London and was attended by Jordanian Ambassador to Britain Fouad Ayoub.

The presentation was made by Staunton Chairman Raymond Keene, Grand Master, OBE, Treasurer Brian Clivaz and Mr. Martin.



HRH Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, receives the insignia of the British Staunton Society (Petra photo)

IAF team discusses Jerusalem with Turkish Islamists

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 10-member delegation from the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party led by the party's secretary general, Ishaq Al Farhan, last week paid a visit to Turkey at the invitation of Dr. Khalil Orm, mayor of the town of Qunyah, who had visited Jordan a few months ago as the party's guest.

According to Dr. Farhan, the delegation "examined the Turkish Welfare Party's achievements and the success of party members in assuming leading positions in the municipalities of Turkey's towns as well as the current situation" following the formation of the new Turkish government led by Islamist professor Necmettin Erbakan.

During the visit, the IAF party delegation met Welfare Party ministers in the present government and presented them with a replica of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem in a gesture "designed to draw the Islamic Nation's attention to the Judaisation process undertaken by Israel in Jerusalem and the Islamic strifes there," according to Dr. Farhan.

He said that the Welfare Party in Turkey had adopted a plan for "liberating the country's economy from Western hegemony."

The delegation included "Mohammad" Al Oweida, "Mohammad" Al Haj, Abdul Aziz Jaber, Hammam Saeed, Yaser Omari, Mamdouh Muheisen, Khaled Habanakeh, Mustafa Al Jaafari and Bassam Ernaoush.

Remaining in Iraq, said he has heard nothing about the government's reaction to his defection.

He also said he did not know his wife's status. The Iraqi National Congress reportedly arranged for her to be moved earlier this week from their home in Basra to a safe haven in northern Iraq's Kurdish region, where Iraqi forces are barred by international sanctions.

"I would like to hear from her. It would make me very happy," he said Friday.

Hebron observers left to drive in circles

HEBRON (AP) — Armed only with tape recorders, cameras and bright blue arm bands, 22 Norwegian observers came to this riven city four months ago to usher in a new era of peace.

Since then, they have done little more than drive in circles, white flags fluttering from their open swing mini-compacts.

On Thursday, for instance, two observers listened intently as a Palestinian man told them an Israeli soldier had broken his car window and cursed him.

"We can do nothing, unfortunately," one observer said, inspecting the smashed window. "Nothing other than to make a report, and wish you good luck."

The observers were full of optimism when they arrived to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli troops and deployment of Palestinian police in most areas of Hebron, the last West Bank city under Israeli occupation.

"We thought it would be a new push for the peace process ... that life in Hebron would be a bit more normal," said Terje Fjermestad, deputy head of the observer mission.

But after Israel's May 29 elections and the advent of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hardline government, plans for the Hebron pullout are on hold.

The observers sit and wait, frustrated by their marginal impact on alleviating hostilities hardened by generations of hate.

Under the latest Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement, Israel was supposed to have pulled its troops out of most of Hebron, a city of 120,000 Palestinians and 450 Jewish settlers, by the end of March.

But after four deadly suicide bombings in February and March, the previous government of Shimon Peres postponed the withdrawal until after the elections, which he lost. His successor, Mr. Netanyahu, has not committed himself to the pull-out.

On Friday, Norway told Israel and the Palestinians that the observers would leave by September if the troops are not redeployed soon.

The Norwegians have been to Hebron before. In 1994, they came as observers following the massacre of at least 30 Muslim worshippers by Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein at the Ibrahimi Mosque.

This time, they were supposed to be the advance team for an international group of 160 observers who were to patrol the border between Palestinians and Israelis.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

The Kaaba to be renovated

KAABA (AP) — The Kaaba, Islam's holiest shrine in Saudi Arabia, will undergo renovation for the first time in 40 years, the Saudi Gazette has reported. The English-language newspaper said Friday a wooden fence has been erected around the stone structure at the Grand Mosque in Mecca for maintenance work ordered by King Fahd. It said the renovation of the Kaaba will take two months, but gave no say how much it will cost. The renovation will be carried out by the Saudi Ben Laden group, which has in the past five years implemented numerous projects for refurbishing and expanding facilities used by pilgrims in Mecca, the birthplace of the Prophet Mohammad — and the faith's holiest city. The Kaaba, a square stone structure believed to have built by Prophet Abraham, is revered in Islam as the house of God. The world's one billion Muslims turn towards the Kaaba in five daily prayers. The Kaaba has a magnificent door with works of gold weighing 270 kilograms. It was last renovated in 1956 during the rule of King Saud. Every year, two million Muslims converge on Mecca for the annual Hajj pilgrimage. Other pilgrims visit all year round for off-season pilgrimage.

Malaria kills 30 in Yemen

SANAA (R) — Malaria and other diseases have killed 30 people in Yemen in the past two months following the worst floods to hit the impoverished Arab state in three decades, an official has been quoted as saying. "Thirty people have died in the governorate of Marib as a result of epidemics during the past two months," Hussein Al Hazebe, a member of an official high relief committee, told Al Thawra newspaper. He said malaria that struck after floods was the main cause of the deaths in the eastern province. Mr. Hazebe warned that half of Marib governorate's population of nearly 168,000 people was now suffering from malaria. "The medical centres and hospitals in the area are limited and the medical supplies needed to combat malaria are limited," he added.

Hariri urges EU-Lebanon cooperation

DUBLIN (AFP) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri called Friday for greater cooperation between Europe and Lebanon on the second day of a two-day visit to Dublin, his Irish counterpart John Bruton said. During talks with Mr. Bruton, whose country holds the six-month rotating presidency of the European Union, Mr. Hariri stressed "the potential for economic cooperation" between Europe and Lebanon, Mr. Bruton said. At a joint press conference, Mr. Bruton said it was important for Irish and European companies "to be aware of the substantial economic potential of Lebanon," adding that Mr. Hariri's visit had made it possible to highlight the potential for cooperation. Mr. Bruton also discussed the Middle East peace process with Mr. Hariri, who held other meetings in Dublin with Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring on Thursday, and with Tourism and Trade Minister Enda Kenny and European Minister Gay Mitchell on Friday morning.

Remains of Denktash's mother to be moved

NICOSIA (AFP) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash has won permission to have the remains of his mother exhumed from a grave in the western town of Paphos and transferred to the northern part of Cyprus. United Nations representative Gustav Feysel told AFP he had "obtained the agreement of Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides several days ago" to Mr. Denktash's request. Cyprus has been divided since 1974 when Turkish troops invaded the northern third of the island in response to a coup in Nicosia inspired by the junta ruling Greece at the time. The Turkish Cypriots set up the breakaway Turkish republic of northern Cyprus in 1983, but it is only recognised by Ankara. Mr. Denktash, president of the Turkish Cypriot administration, was born in Paphos in 1924 and his mother Emine died there 18 years later.

Smuggler nailed with elephant tusk

ATHENS (AFP) — Greek police arrested an antiques smuggler who was preparing to sell overseas an elephant tusk more than a million years old, authorities said Friday. Anastassios Alexopoulos, 49, was arrested Thursday in Athens after several days of surveillance by police acting on a tip that he was planning to sell a number of antiquities abroad. Police searched his family home in the Peloponnese region of southern Greece and found a two-metre tusk, teeth and bones from an 80-tonne elephant. Paleontologists said the remains were between a million and two million years old. Mr. Alexopoulos said he found them in a river bed. Police also found cases of Greek antiquities ranging from cups to idols, as well as priceless Byzantine pieces dating from 1700 B.C. to 1000 A.D.

Iraqi defector says he's been granted asylum in U.S.

ATLANTA (AP) — Iraqi weightlifter Raed Ahmad, who fled from his teammates at the Olympics and denounced his country's government, said Friday he has been granted political asylum in the United States.

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) refused to confirm or deny the claim.

A document with an INS letterhead, sent by fax to the Associated Press, said that Ahmad's request for political asylum had been approved. The document

was given to the AP by an Atlanta spokesman for the London-based Iraqi National Congress, an organisation opposed to Saddam Hussein's regime.

"It has been determined you have established a well-founded fear of persecution were you return to your country," said the letter, which bore the signature of Joseph P. Martin, director of the INS asylum office in Arlington, Virginia.

The letter granted Ahmad asylum indefinitely and said the athlete could apply to be

a permanent resident in one year.

Ahmad, 29, said Thursday he surely would be executed if he returned to Iraq. He met with the INS, then nervously waited for the decision, Ahmad said Friday.

"I was very sensitive, like a person waiting for exam results," he said through an interpreter. "But I was very optimistic. I know the American people will accept me."

Ahmad, who earlier expressed fear of reprisals against family members

remaining in Iraq, said he has heard nothing about the government's reaction to his defection.

He also said he did not know his wife's status. The Iraqi National Congress reportedly arranged for her to be moved earlier this week from their home in Basra to a safe haven in northern Iraq's Kurdish region, where Iraqi forces are barred by international sanctions.

"I would like to hear from her. It would make me very happy," he said Friday.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
13:03.....Cartoon — The Mask
13:25.....Een's Lucy
13:55.....Olympic Games
19:00.....Le Journal
19:10.....Olympic Games
22:00.....News in English
22:15.....Olympic Games

PRAYER TIMES

04:20.....Fajr
05:47.....(Sunrise) Duha
12:42.....Dhuhr
16:22.....'Asr
19:36.....Maghreb
21:03.....Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifheh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church
Tel. 652526

WEATHER

Moderate summer weather conditions will prevail with temperatures slightly below average and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman.....20/31
Aqaba.....26/38
Deserts.....18/35
Jordan Valley.....24/38

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 33, Aqaba 40. Humidity readings: Amman 38 per cent, Aqaba 33 per cent.

AMMAN:

Dr. Hanna Mansour.....798863
Dr. Nidal Dahleh.....827195
Dr. Afif Shukri.....898863
Dr. Sa'ed Tawfiq.....788285
Firas pharmacy.....661912
Ferdows pharmacy.....778336
Al Asera pharmacy.....637055
Nairoukh pharmacy.....623672
Al Salam pharmacy.....636730
Yacoub pharmacy.....644945
Shmeisani pharmacy.....637660
Najib pharmacy.....847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh.....250080
Al Quds pharmacy.....(—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Yousef Harzallah.....988075
Khalifeh pharmacy.....985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....637111
Civil Defence Department.....661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue.....630341
Civil Defence Emergency.....199
Rescue Police.....192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade.....617101
Blood Bank.....775121
Highway Police.....843402
Traffic Police.....896390
Public Security Dept.....630321
Hotel Complaints.....605800
Price Complaints.....661176
Water & Sewage Complaints.....897467
Amman Municipality Complaints.....

TELEPHONE INFORMATION

787111
assistance.....121
Overseas Calls.....010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs.....623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs.....661101
Jordan Television.....773111
Radio Jordan.....774111
Water Authority.....680100
J. Electricity Authority.....815615
Electric Power Co.....636381
RJ Flight Information.....08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre.....813813/32
Khalidi Maternity.....644281/6
Akileh Maternity.....643441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity.....642362
Malhas, J. Amman.....636140
Palestine, Shmeisani.....607071
Shmeisani Hospital.....669131
University Hospital.....845845
Al-Muasher Hospital.....667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali.....666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali.....664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen.....777101/3
Al-Bashir.....775111/26
Army, Marika.....891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital.....60240/50
Amal Hospital.....674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery.....865199
ZARQA:
Govt. Hospital

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
05:00.....Madrid (add) (RJ)
09:50.....Dhahran (add) (RJ)
09:30.....Jeddah (RJ)
09:55.....Lamaca (RJ)
10:05.....Riyadh (RJ)

Other Flights

06:30.....Tel Aviv (LY)
12:30.....Doha (QF)
13:40.....Bahrain (GF)
15:05.....Moscow (SU)
16:30.....Dubai (EK)
20:35.....Cairo (MS)
21:10.....Beirut (ME)
22:15.....London, Beirut (BA)
23:20.....Istanbul (TK)
23:30.....Athens (OA)
01:20.....Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
02:30.....Belgrade (GU)

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:35.....Beirut (RJ)
07:00.....Rome (add) (RJ)
08:00.....Madrid (RJ)
09:30.....Frankfurt (RJ)
11:30.....Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)
12:00.....Tunis (RJ)
12:15.....Rome (RJ)
12:15.....Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30.....Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:30.....Athens (RJ)
13:25.....London (RJ)
21:10.....Cairo (RJ)
21:45.....Damascus (RJ)
21:50.....New Delhi (RJ)
22:00.....Jeddah (RJ)
22:20.....Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:45.....Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:50.....Bangkok (RJ)
23:45.....Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:40.....London (KJ)
07:25.....Tel Aviv (LY)
09:15.....London (BA)
12:00.....Sanaa (IY)
14:30.....Doha (GF)
16:05.....Moscow (SU)
21:25.....Cairo (MS)
02:30.....Amsterdam (KL)
03:30.....Belgrade (GU)
04:00.....Athens (OA)
06:00.....Istanbul (TK)
07:45.....Beirut, London (BA)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple.....700/500
Banana.....600/600
Banana (mukhammar).....520/520
Banana (imported).....800/600
Cabbage.....400/300
Carrot.....170/90
Cauliflower.....250/160
Cucumber (large).....220/140
Cucumber (small).....350/220
Eggplant.....200/120
Garlic.....650/400
Grapes.....420/280
Lemon.....670/400
Marrow (large).....250/150
Marrow (small).....400/250
Muliukhiyah.....110/70
Onion (dry).....150/80
Okra.....750/450
Pea.....650/400
Pear.....750/500
Pepper (hot).....320/200
Pepper (sweet).....320/200
Potato.....330/220
String Bean.....680/400

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Foreign aid-workers kidnapped in Chechnya

GROZNY, Russia (R) — Two foreign aid-workers have been kidnapped in Chechnya, raising new fears about security in the breakaway Caucasus region.

Igor Pogorov, press secretary of the Russian-backed Chechen Interior Ministry, said the two men, a Briton and a Frenchman, disappeared on July 27 and a special task force had been set up to look for them.

"We received a phone call yesterday from someone who said he saw armed men bundle the two foreigners into a car in Grozny," Pogorov said. "nobody has claimed responsibility."

Tension is already high in Chechnya, which declared itself independent in 1992, amid rumours that rebel forces are poised to attack Grozny, its capital, and that rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev will "return from the dead."

Chechen leaders said in April that Dudayev was killed by a Russian rocket which homed in on his satellite telephone.

Rumours that he was alive gained force when rebel Commander Salmar Raduyev, who had also been reported dead, reappeared and told journalists Dudayev had survived but was badly wounded. Russian officials have dismissed the talk.

The rebels accused Russian troops Saturday of launching artillery raids in

the south of the region and said 20 people had been killed and 30 wounded, Interfax News Agency said.

The agency, quoting Russian military officials, also said 12 Border Guards were hurt when their armoured personnel carrier was attacked in Ingushetia, the region which borders Chechnya.

The kidnappings were the latest in a series in the region, where many humanitarian groups have tried to help civilians caught up in fighting between separatists and Russian troops.

Western embassies have advised their nationals to stay clear of the region.

Britain's Foreign Office named one of the missing men as Michael Penrose, 23, who was working for the aid group International Action Against Hunger.

The French Foreign Ministry said aid worker Frederic Malehodu had also been seized.

"Our embassy in Moscow is following this affair very closely and it is in close liaison with the Russian authorities whom we contacted immediately," a spokesman said.

Guns seized two workers from the medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) earlier this year but released them unharmed after two weeks.

U.S. aid worker Fred Cuny went missing in April

1995. His brother said later he thought Mr. Cuny and the three Russians he was travelling with had been executed on suspicion of spying.

"We are saying they have been executed. We don't know specifically who did it," Chris Cuny said in August 1995.

Some foreign aid groups, echoing criticism from Russian human rights activists, have complained about widespread abuse of human rights in the mountainous region.

"Chechnya touches in the most brutal way the most number of people," Rachel Denber, Moscow director of the human rights watch Helsinki Group, said Friday.

"We are talking about indiscriminate bombing and shelling of civilians, using the strategic advantage Russia has in the air."

The Chechnya conflict has been marked by claims and counter-claims since it began. Round upon round of peace talks have brought no solution, although Russian news agencies said a delegation had arrived for new talks Saturday.

"Our main aim is find out about the realisation of (previous) agreements and take appropriate measures for their implementation," Russian Nationalities Minister Vyacheslav Mikhailov told ITAR-TASS news agency in Grozny.

Yeltsin out of public view a week ahead of historic date

MOSCOW (AFP) — Less than a week before he is to be sworn in for a new term as president, Boris Yeltsin is still out of the public eye, officially "resting," while the Kremlin appears to be preparing for a prolonged absence.

Mr. Yeltsin's aide Georgi Satarov Friday said the president was suffering "colossal weariness" after an exhausting election campaign and would need to rest for about two months.

Earlier, Mr. Yeltsin's chief of staff, Anatoli Chubais, said he had advised the president to take "a real vacation" after he is sworn in for his second term of office in a lavish ceremony at the Kremlin Friday.

Mr. Yeltsin disappeared from public view shortly before the second round of presidential elections on July 3, amid speculation about his health.

The 65-year-old president had two heart attacks last year.

But Mr. Satarov said Mr. Yeltsin's tiredness had "nothing to do with a serious illness, like heart disease or something like that."

"Of course, (Yeltsin) does not feel as well as he did in May. But he is in perfect intellectual and psychological shape," Mr. Satarov said.

Mr. Satarov insisted if something was seriously wrong, Mr. Yeltsin would be in hospital instead of in a rest home in the Moscow suburb of Barvikha.

Mr. Yeltsin retreated to the rest home after a gruelling four-month campaign which had him crossing the country and even dancing with a crowd of supporters.

Aides will give no firm date for his return to the Kremlin.

Since his abrupt exit, Mr. Yeltsin has appeared only briefly on television, surrounded by advisors and looking thinner and tired.

A power-struggle which erupted immediately after the election between Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and newly-appointed national security chief Alexander Lebed has added to speculation about the end of Mr. Yeltsin's reign.

Mr. Satarov, in a newspaper interview, said Mr. Yeltsin fully intended to serve out his four-year term but added the president had reflected on a possible successor — mentioning Mr. Chernomyrdin, Gen. Lebed and Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov.

Even the Russian media has broken the taboo on discussing Mr. Yeltsin's health.

"Now that pre-election passions have eased, the question of the president's health remains," said the weekly Argumenti i Fakty, but added the issue was "worrying the West a great deal more than it is worrying Russia."

The real test comes Friday, Mr. Yeltsin's date with history as he takes the oath as post-Soviet Russia's first democratically-elected president.

The Communist newspaper Pravda 5 reported Saturday that the ceremony had been toned down so as not to tire Mr. Yeltsin.

"The original programme would have meant the president standing for hours and then welcoming 600 guests for an evening reception."

"But it is not clear if a 65-year-old president, suffering from heart problems and known for his penchant for alcoholic drinks, would have the strength to go through with it," Pravda 5 said.

According to Friday's provisional programme, obtained by AFP, the swearing in ceremony itself will last 35 minutes and a banquet follows late afternoon.



Jane Shelley, wife of American hostage Donald Hutchings (left) and Julie Mangan, wife of British hostage Keith Mangan arrive at Srinagar airport on Aug. 2. The two wives returned to the troubled state Friday while U.S. diplomats appealed to the people to help free the tourists kidnapped by the shadowy Al Faran militant group since July 1995 while hitch hiking in south Kashmir (Reuter photo)

Wives plead for release of Western hostages in Kashmir

Srinagar, India (AFP) — The wives of two Western tourists kidnapped by Muslim rebels in Kashmir more than a year ago pleaded with local villagers Saturday to help win their husbands' release.

Jane Schelley, wife of American Donald Hutchings, and Julie Mangan, wife of British Keith Mangan, met the village head at Magam Rakh, the head priest of the local mosque and other villagers and asked for help to trace their missing husbands, witnesses said.

"Please provide us with clues about our husbands and we will be thankful to you," Mrs. Schelley told one of the village women.

"We want to know whether they are alive or dead," Indian authorities launched a search of Magam Rakh two months ago for the bodies of the men and two other Western hostages after an arrested Muslim militant said all had been killed by their captors.

from their captors on July 8.

Tight security surrounded the women's visit to Magam Rakh, 80 kilometres from this summer state capital, with police restricting entry to the village and searching several houses for arms.

Mrs. Schelley and Mrs. Mangan were also scheduled to meet state authorities, police officials and leaders of the Muslim separatist movement in Kashmir during their three-day stay in Kashmir.

Their trip coincides with a visit to Kashmir by U.S. ambassador to India Frank Wisner, who is also making efforts to secure the release of the hostages.

The shadowy Al Faran rebel group kidnapped Mangan, Paul Wells, also of Britain, Mrs. Hutchings, of Spokane, Washington, and fellow American John Childs on July 4 last year, while they were trekking in the Himalayan foothills with their wives.

The wives were released and Mr. Childs escaped

but none were found.

from their captors on July 8.

The abduction has been criticised by most Muslim militant groups and the powerful All Party Kashmir Freedom Conference, an umbrella organisation of Kashmiri Muslim separatist groups.

More than 12,000 people have died since the Muslim militancy erupted in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, in 1989.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training Kashmiri rebels, a charge denied by Islamabad.

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Turkish national hero's remains leave Tajikistan

ALMATY, Kazakhstan (R) — The remains of Turkish national hero Enver Pasha left the Central Asian state of Tajikistan for Turkey Saturday, a Turkish embassy spokesman in the Tajik capital Dushanbe said.

"The remains left at around 8 a.m. (0200 GMT) for Istanbul," the spokesman told Reuters from Dushanbe. The body will be buried in Istanbul Sunday, the anniversary of Enver's death.

Turkish President Suleyman Demirel is expected to attend the ceremony. Enver Pasha died aged 41 in a hail of machine gun bullets as he led Muslim guerrillas against Soviet forces in Central Asia in 1922. He was buried by a local mullah in an unmarked grave. Enver was one of a ruling triumvirate known as the Young Turks which took the Ottoman Empire into World War I on the side of Germany in 1914. He fled Turkey in a German submarine near the war's end in 1918. He later arrived in Central Asia after promising Soviet state founder Vladimir Lenin he would help spread communism.

But, swayed by Turkish nationalism in Central Asia, Enver abandoned Lenin to join and lead the Muslim guerrillas.

Beijing clamps down on illegal police sirens

BEIJING (AFP) — China's capital has launched a new campaign against crime — this time against drivers with illegal flashing lights and sirens on top of their vehicles. Xinhua reported Friday. Beijing's chronic traffic jams have prompted underground sales of police sirens to people who want to get around the city faster. But the Public Security Bureau has had enough of drivers scooting through the traffic without permission, according to China's official news agency. Any drivers discovered with illicit sirens and flashing lights can have their license revoked and face a fine of up to 20,000 yuan (\$2,400). "Only vehicles used by police stations, security forces, prisons, courts, procurators and fire and rescue teams are permitted to use flashing lights and sirens," the dispatch warned.

Callers mix up help line with sex line

TALLAHASSEE, Florida (AFP) — Many Florida telephone customers trying to dial a toll-free number to clear up questions about a new area code are ending up getting a telephone sex line, a state official said. To cope with the growing number of customers in Broward County, the Bell South Telephone Company established a new area code. An area code, which determines what part of the country a call goes to, is composed of three digits that precede the normal seven in U.S. phone numbers. And to cope with questions during the transition to the new area code, officials advertised a toll-free number for customers to call. But, just as the expanding client base required the addition of a new area code, the telephone company has also had to add a new prefix for toll-free calls. So instead of the traditional 1-800 toll free prefix which has been completely allocated, customers with questions were instructed to use a new 1-888 toll-free prefix. The 8's make all the difference. But when many people hear "toll-free" they still dial 1-800 out of habit. "Since we say it's toll-free people do the natural thing," said the head of the Florida Public Service Commission, Joe Garcia. "They dial 800. But a woman gets on instead. A greeting message: 'Hello, lover, you've reached the hottest, most seductive adult phone service in America.'"

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Thousands flee island after Filipino Muslim guerrillas storm village

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AFP) — Thousands of villagers fled their homes on an island off this southern Philippine port city after some 500 heavily armed men in fatigues, claiming to be Muslim rebels, stormed their village, evacuees said Saturday.

About 2,000 residents of the predominantly Christian village of Limaong, 95 kilometres east of here, said the men began landing on the island's shores Thursday aboard inflatable boats.

Zamboanga City Councillor Jaime Cabato urged the military to respond to the raid but military officials here were not available for comment.

Mr. Cabato said if the raid was confirmed to be the act of one of the major Muslim insurgent groups, and was not sanctioned by the military, it would be a clear breach of ceasefire agreements with the government.

The raiders told villagers they were establishing a base on the island, said the evacuees, who came to this port in their own boats.

A Limaong fishpond owner, who refused to be identified, said the rebels warned civilians to leave the island, which they claimed as their ancestral homeland.

He said men told residents: "We have to leave the place or something will happen to us."

"Considering that they are heavily armed our lives are in danger."

A woman who also fled here said the rebels took villagers' water buffalo and warned them to leave their homes.

There were about 7,000 residents in fertile Limaong.

The evacuees did not know which Muslim insurgent group the rebels belonged to but the city official said the rebels claimed to be members of the regular forces of the

main Muslim insurgent group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

The MNLF in June signed an interim peace deal with the government, intended to end 24 years of bloody sectarian strife in the southern Philippines.

But the Christian majority in the south has strongly opposed the peace agreement, which gives the MNLF control of a council overseeing development projects in the region, fearing it will lead to domination by the Muslim minority.

Meanwhile, tension rose in the towns of Sibuco, Siocan, Siraway and Baliguan in the southern province of Zamboanga Del Norte as 80 heavily-armed rebels of the MNLF splinter group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) invaded the towns' outskirts early this week, a source said.

Five militiamen were reported killed in several encounters in the province, the source added.

The report came a day after the MILF announced the defection of 2,000 MNLF members, apparently disillusioned by MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari's decision to run for governor of a smaller existing autonomous region as part of the interim peace deal.

But in general Santos City, west of here, Saturday Brigadier General Raul Urgello, of the military's Southern Command, dismissed the MILF as a potential threat, saying they had less than 10,000 men and were torn by infighting.

"They have to put their act together," Brig. Urgello said. "Sometimes we are there to mediate their internal conflicts."

Brig. Urgello was accompanying Philippine Armed Forces Chief of Staff Arturo Enrile on a campaign to urge opponents of the MNLF peace deal to give it a chance.

North Korea seen facing famine

SEOUL (R) — Food shortages in North Korea have reached famine levels in some areas and recent floods dim prospects for the isolated state, an aid group said Friday.

"North Korea will face great tragedy unless the weather condition improves in weeks to come," Tetsunao Yamamori, president of the Food for the Hungry International (FHI), said in an interview in Seoul.

Meanwhile, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) said the increasing number of flood victims with diarrhoea was developing into a serious problem.

"They have reported diarrhoea, and that is a direct result of the flooding," IFRC Representative Geoff Dennis told Reuters in Beijing by telephone from Pyongyang.

"It is a very serious problem... that has got to be dealt with," he said.

The government and IFRC so far had managed to control the diarrhoea out-

breaks with antibiotics, he said.

Mr. Yamamori, who visited North Korea from July 23-30 to deliver medicine and collect data on damage inflicted by last year's crippling floods, said the next six months would be critical.

North Korea had suffered from chronic hunger, "which we call a silent killer," in the past six years, he said.

His Geneva-based agency offers food aid and development programmes in cooperation with international relief groups around the world, he said.

South Korean officials said North Korea's grain shortages in the past five years ranged from just

Ex-Premier Debre, aide to De Gaulle, dies at 84

PARIS (R) — Former French Prime Minister Michel Debre, Charles De Gaulle's most trusted aide and the architect of the Fifth Republic, died Friday aged 84.

The Gaullist RPR party said he died at his home in the village of Montlouis-Sur-Loire in central France after a long illness.

Debre, often described as more Gaullist than his mentor, was put in charge of drafting the constitution of France's 38-year-old Fifth Republic and was its first prime minister when De Gaulle became president in 1959.

Fellow Gaullists paid tribute to him as a father of the country's political stability.

"France has lost one of its greatest servants," Gaullist President Jacques Chirac, whose first act when he was elected last year was to visit Debre, said in a message of condolence.

"He was a father of our constitution, to which our nation owes its stability... His work is immense."

Debre, a resistance disciple of De Gaulle's during World War II and a prickly nationalist, held every major government post apart from president. He was prime minister from 1959 to 1962 and later served as defence, finance and foreign minister.

Prime Minister Alain Juppe, the head of the Gaullist Party, hailed him as a great statesman who had left a lasting mark on French politics.

A supporter of French rule in Algeria, Debre led the government from 1959 to 1962 in a period of bitter civil strife over De Gaulle's decision to grant the North African colony independence after a long guerrilla war.

Former Premier Jacques Chaban-Delmas

hailed Debre as a brother and said he had valiantly but painfully endorsed De Gaulle's Algeria policies over his own ideas.

De Gaulle and Debre were the target of assassination plots from diehard rightists when France gave up its colony.

"I don't really like politicians, but he was an exception. Debre and De Gaulle were really great figures," said former General Marcel Bigeard who led French paratroopers in Algeria.

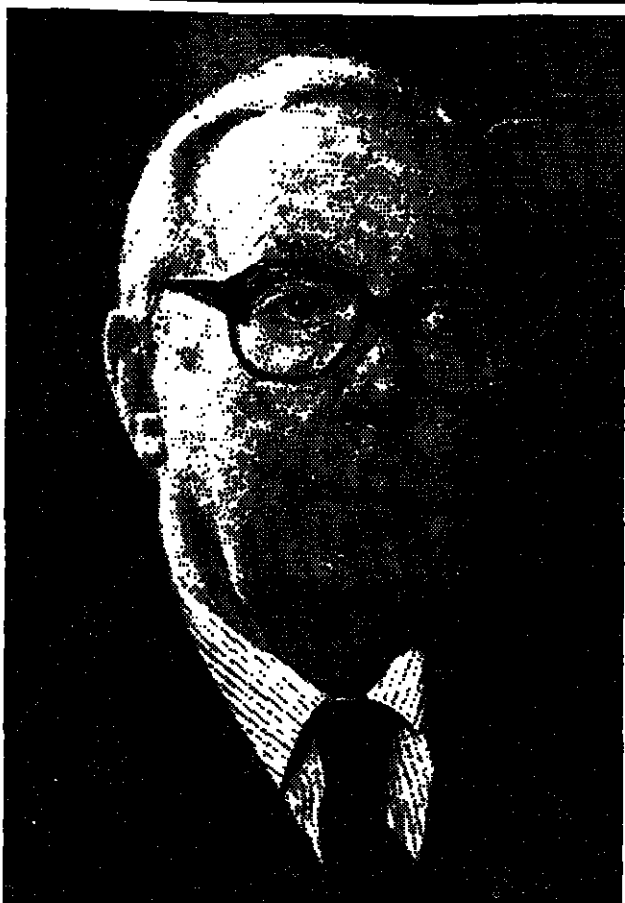
Debre, a leftists' Bete Noire, dropped out of the limelight in 1973 when De Gaulle's successor Georges Pompidou became convinced that he was giving his government a reactionary image.

Often regarded as humourless and ill-tempered, he won just one per cent of the vote when he stood for president in 1981 but remained a prominent figure in the political landscape.

Born to an illustrious family, the son of a prominent medical professor and the brother of a noted artist, Debre was the father of the present Interior Minister, Jean-Louis Debre.

Another of his sons, Bernard, is a member of the French National Assembly, a former cooperation minister and a prominent surgeon who was part of the medical team that treated the late Socialist President Francois Mitterrand for cancer.

Trained as a lawyer, Debre was a prolific writer of political books and was elected to the French Academy in 1988.



Former French Prime Minister Michel Debre died Friday at the age of 84. Debre, a resistance disciple of De Gaulle during World War II and a prickly nationalist, held every government post and later served as defence, finance and Foreign Minister (Reuter photo)

Priebke says Jews playing 'dirty game' against him

ROME (R) — Former SS Captain Erich Priebke was quoted Saturday as saying Jews were playing a "dirty game" to keep him behind bars after a military court ordered him freed without punishment for Italy's worst wartime atrocity.

Priebke was re-arrested early Friday following notice that German prosecutors intend to seek his extradition.

His return to jail on a temporary detention order, upheld by a Rome appeals court Saturday, ended an angry siege by young protesters which had kept the 83-year-old German blocked inside the court after Italy exploded in fury at the verdict.

"I understand their pain, which endures despite the years, but it seemed to me there were some fanatics there," Priebke told La Stampa in an interview at Regina Coeli Jail, where he has been held since early Friday.

"The people who staged that demonstration were a minority. I don't want to accuse the Jews, but they're the ones who are playing a dirty game, who are trying to get me," he said.

The interview was conducted by member of parliament Jas Gawronski, one of Italy's most respected journalists. He was able to visit Priebke as a parliamentarian.

"I think they've got it in for me because I have become a symbol... I'm like the last of the Mohicans," Priebke said. Priebke has admitted taking part in the SS reprisal massacre of 335 civilian men and boys, including 75 Jews, at the Ardeatine Caves outside Rome on March 24, 1944.

Megawati summoned, Indonesian activists banned from travel

JAKARTA (AFP) — Opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputri has been summoned by police for questioning as authorities tighten their grip in a nationwide political crackdown, closing the borders to activists and forcing many into hiding.

Ms. Megawati received the summons Friday night to go to the Jakarta Police Headquarters Monday, one of her lawyers, Robert Tambunan said Saturday.

Ms. Megawati will cooperate and attend the questioning, he said.

The Attorney General Singgih said last week that Ms. Megawati and three other parliamentarians from the Indonesian Democracy Party (PDI) would be questioned in relation to a free speech forum, held for six weeks outside PDI headquarters.

As the authorities step up their attack on the opposition, all speakers at the forum have been placed on a travel blacklist, an unidentified military source told the state Antara News Agency.

"Their names have been sent to immigration offices at all sea and airports in the country to prevent them from fleeing overseas," the military source said.

In addition to the free speech sessions, the military has also said Ms. Megawati should take some responsibility for violent riots last weekend that left three people dead and 26 injured, according to official figures.

Youths went on the rampage following a military raid on the PDI headquarters aimed at expelling Ms. Megawati's supporters from the building.

Since that time the government has launched a repressive crackdown on activists connected to Megawati and anyone else they consider political opponents.

Lieutenant General Syarwan Hamid confirmed Wednesday the military's threat that soldiers would shoot on sight anyone who disturbed the peace.

"I have been in hiding since Monday, when my flatmate told me there were four security officers at my house wanting to arrest me," one activist said by

phone Saturday.

Over 100 activists have gone underground in Jakarta and are moving from one safe house to another, keeping in contact only by pager messages, he said.

The police are hunting for Peoples' Democratic Party (PRD) activists in cities across Java after senior military and government officials — without evidence — accused the group of being Communists, and fomenting last weekend's riots.

Police raided the group's office in Yogyakarta, central Java, Friday, seizing documents and copies of a political magazine published by the two year old group.

Analysts say the left-wing PRD, thought to number 150 vocal activists, had had little or no involvement in the riots and could pose no real threat to the government.

"We are afraid that this will be a long process and that it will become a cleansing operation... the government is deliberately letting some of the PRD members go free so that they have the legitimacy to arrest the rest

of us," the activist said.

Travel bans have also been placed on six opposition figures in connection with the riots, the daily Kompas reported. The six include Muchtar Pakpahan, the general secretary of the Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union (SBSI), Budiman Sujatmiko, PRD chairman, and four other activists whose names were not made available.

Mr. Pakpahan was arrested Tuesday and has been charged with subversion, which carries a maximum penalty of death and allows authorities to hold him for a year without trial.

Five student activists were arrested by police Friday in Yogyakarta as they held a demonstration outside the Gajah Mada University, the Jakarta Post reported.

Two other student activists, also associated with the PRD, were arrested in Jakarta Friday, the Legal Aid Institute confirmed.

The institute has released a list of 20 people still missing after last weekend's riots. Police have indicated they will charge 123 rioters with subversion.

Sri Lanka rebels let civilians leave in food deal

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil Tiger rebels allowed 200 shaken and hungry civilians to move south to army-held areas Saturday, paving the way for truckloads of food and medicine to reach tens of thousands of refugees in rebel-held territory.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) allowed the civilians to cross the northern Thandikulam border a day after the Sri Lankan Red Cross brokered a deal between the army and the LTTE to let the food convoys reach the refugees, who are fleeing an army advance.

Army officials checked our identity cards and birth certificates to verify our ages," a resident of Kilinochchi town told Reuters

after arriving in the government-controlled frontline town of Vavuniya.

Though the army has agreed to gradually ease travel restrictions from the north, it remains concerned that rebels may infiltrate and had stipulated that youths aged between 15 and 35 would not be allowed to pass.

Officials said the first food convoy was expected to leave for the LTTE areas Sunday.

Some 200 lorries laden with food have been stranded in Vavuniya for more than two weeks since the border was closed.

"The difficulty is that truck owners in the LTTE areas have been scattered because of the battle around

Kilinochchi," one Tamil government official who arrived from the north told Reuters.

"Some trucks are using the lorries as their homes. We have to find them and get them together," he said.

The army launched a major offensive on rebel-held Kilinochchi on July 26, forcing most of the town's 150,000 people, including refugees, to flee.

"We're very concerned about the civilian population," said Marco Weil of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Friday. "Tens of thousands of people have left their homes."

He told Reuters earlier in Colombo the ICRC had followed other Western aid

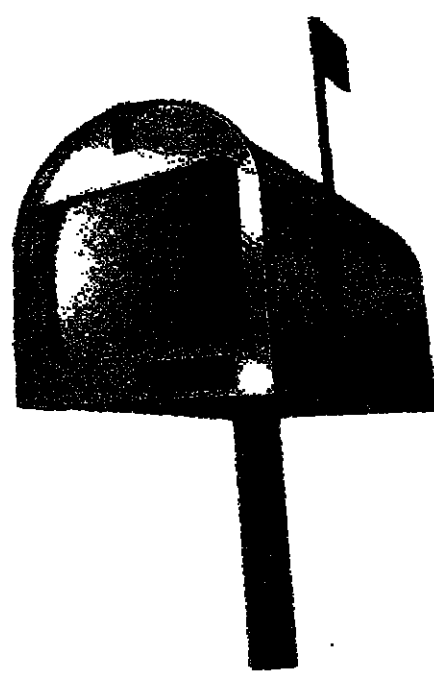
agencies in leaving Kilinochchi, the immediate target of the military push.

The rebels moved their headquarters to Kilinochchi in April after the military retook the Jaffna peninsula, which the LTTE had run as a mini-state for most of the 13-year separatist war which the government says has cost more than 50,000 lives.

Military officials said they believed the LTTE closed the crossing point just north of Vavuniya to prevent information leaking about their casualties and arms captured in last month's attack on the army base at Mullaitivu on the northeast coast.

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
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University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

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Super body needed

A PROMINENT economist recently complained that Jordan was among a few countries that did not have a government body responsible for the management of its economy and for the evaluation of its economic performance. The lecturer, Dr. Ibrahim Badran, who heads the Neor Al Hussein Foundation and who served as the undersecretary of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, further said that there were no recognised institutions in the country that could provide neutral and reliable economic data.

This seems to be an exaggeration of the situation but the idea of creating such an institution is, in itself, of paramount importance and deserves to be considered and analysed very carefully. Some people may argue that the Ministry of Planning or the General Statistics Department are the two bodies that manage the economy, examine its performance, and provide information and the data. They would point to the monthly, quarterly and annual bulletins and publications that are issued by the Central Bank and other ministries and departments as sufficing for the purpose.

The core of the issue, however, is not in the lack of institutions. Each ministry is responsible for a specific portion of the economy, pursuing defined targets and executing policies. Dr. Badran's complaint is not also about the lack of information or data. Each ministry or department runs its own statistics and prepares its own reports. As such, the gap is specifically in coordination between the various institutions that handle the overall economy.

At present, the prime minister's office is the focal point for all the ministries. Each one of them sends its reports, demands, complaints or views to this office which in turn, processes it before rerouting the material to other ministries for review, evaluation or execution.

Real economic coordination, therefore, takes place at the prime ministry whereas it should be handled at a different level such as "ministry for economic coordination" which should function as the focal point to various ministries.

What makes the present setup cumbersome is that coordination at the prime ministry is conducted between ministers and senior officials, while at a lower level (ministry for economic coordination) the coordination would involve junior officials from all the ministries concerned. In addition to streamlining and sifting the work of several ministries, this body would be able to improve and upgrade economic figures and information submitted by each ministry to a level where it would be accurate and convincing.

Some officials complain that available information and data is merely routine and often outdated statistics, that is only fit to be viewed from a historical point of view or to be evaluated from the perspective of writing talent and composing skill. That is why there is a need for a body that would collect all the relevant information and regularly update them, plan and execute economic policies and periodically evaluate economic performance.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the death of a Palestinian youth as a result of torture in Palestinian jails, a writer for Al Ra'i said that those responsible for this tragedy have offered a valuable service to Israel which continually tries to paint a bad image of the Arabs as being undemocratic, bent on committing acts of violence. The officers or officials responsible for the tragic death of Mahmoud Jamil should face trial and held accountable for their criminal act, and the Palestinian leader ought to take appropriate and effective measures that can prevent a recurrence of such horrible behaviour on the part of the Palestine National Authority's (PNA) cadres of different ranks and responsibilities, demanded Sultan Al Hatab. It seems that within these cadres there exists a group that has no regard to human life and therefore their presence in power is unjustified, he continued. The death of Mahmoud Jamil is a stigma on Palestine and the Palestinians because he died as a result of torture and without fair trial for alleged violations of the Palestinian law, he continued.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily discussed the question of possible danger to Jordan resulting from Israel's nuclear arsenal and said that any leaks from nuclear facilities in Israel, which is close to Jordan, would have disastrous effects on the Kingdom, particularly to the southern Jordanian regions, including Tafleeh and the ancient city of Petra. Fahd Al Fanek said that any leaks from Israel's nuclear reactors could also travel as far as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria and Egypt. The writer said that by refusing to join the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and allowing international inspectors examine its nuclear facilities Israel could be hiding secrets from the world like possessing hundreds of nuclear heads with which to threaten the Arab countries including Jordan. Since the United States is guaranteeing Israel's strength militarily and economically and since Israel possesses conventional military power, equal to all the Arab countries put together, why should it be helped by the West to build a nuclear arsenal, asked the writer.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Minimum wages — good or bad?

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

I HOPE I am not revealing a secret in reporting that Dr. Abdul Hafez Shakhaneh, minister of labour, is planning to impose a minimum wage of no less than JD 100 a month. The minimum wage may be even more, depending on how this step is received in official and business circles which will be involved and have a say in taking the decision.

According to the new Labour Law, such a decision clearly falls within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labour. A minimum wage can be found in most democratic countries with free market economies. It is by no means in contradiction with the principles of market economics, because such economies should have many checks and controls to prevent exploitation. Among them is the concept of minimum wages which secures the level of subsistence for the worker and his family, just above the poverty line.

Minimum wages can be described as civilised. However, most economists take a negative position towards the intervention of the government in the determination of wages, because minimum wages will, most likely, be higher

than the balance determined by supply and demand in cases of high unemployment, and may hurt the weakest groups of job seekers, such as the young, the inexperienced, the old and the handicapped. Since the employer would have to pay the minimum wages anyway, he may insist on selecting only the fit and qualified.

The economists opposing the concept of minimum wage point out that its imposition may benefit those already working for low wages, but may hurt the unemployed by reducing the available number of jobs, especially when employers respond by reducing the volume of jobs offered to make up for the extra cost.

The Ministry of Labour aims at raising wages to a level acceptable to Jordanians. Since Jordanians have the priority to occupy the jobs before employers are allowed to engage guest workers, the policy of minimum wages will encourage voluntary gradual replacement and reduction of non-Jordanian labourers, estimated to exceed 400,000, thus taking care of one of the most important distortions and dislocations in the Jordanian labour market.

The U.S. recently witnessed vivid discussions over the issue of increasing minimum wages, suggested by the Clinton administration, from \$4.50 to \$5.20 per hour. It was evident that economists, this time, did not stick to their traditional position of rejecting higher minimum wages. Many economists approved the concept of minimum wages on the understanding that empirical studies did not prove that the theoretical negative consequences did actually take place in real life.

The initiative of the Ministry of Labour will be well received by the leaders of the working class and most of the political and social activists, but it will face fierce resistance from certain employers who feel free to exploit workers and reduce wages to the extent that the jobs become unacceptable, except to non-Jordanian workers who currently accept wages as low as 50 per cent below the line of poverty.

The issue is worth an objective dialogue before taking a final decision.

Burma — 'all they have is guns'

By Gwynne Dyer

"PATRIOTISM IS the last refuge of a scoundrel," said Sam Johnson — but Burma's military rulers believe that a little racism also helps. Not only is Aung San Suu Kyi unpatriotic for opposing Burma's generals, wrote the government-controlled paper "New Light" early this month, she also "had her blood mixed with that of an Englishman and gave birth to two half-castes."

Vicious talk was aimed at smearing Burma's pro-democracy leader as the annual meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) convened in Jakarta to consider admitting Burma to its ranks.

ASEAN did grant Burma observer status on July 18, but few people in Burma were shaken in their loyalty to a woman who has selflessly dedicated her life to her country.

There is no starker political contrast in the world. On the one hand, arrogant and brutal generals who have ruled Burma since 1962. On the other, Aung San Suu Kyi, a 51-year-old woman with no political experience who has incarnated Burma's democratic aspirations for the past eight years. A woman who, until 1988, had spent very little of her adult life in Burma.

"It is very different from living in academia in Oxford," she remarked at that time, as thousands of Burmese laid down their lives in non-violent protests aimed at freeing their country from military misrule.

"We called someone vicious in the 'Times Literary Supplement'. We didn't know what vicious was."

Aung San Suu Kyi left

Burma when she was 15 years old, to complete her education in India, Britain and Japan. In the 1970s she married English academic Michael Aris, an expert on Tibet, and they settled down in Oxford. There she lived quietly, teaching at the university and raising their two sons — until a visit to Burma in 1988 to care for her dying mother transformed her life.

The soldiers had already ruled Burma for a generation, enriching themselves as they turned South-East Asia's richest country into an isolated, terrorised and impoverished pariah state. But in 1987, dictator Ne Win went too far: he cancelled Burma's money and issued new 45- and 90-kyat notes — because those numbers were both divisible by nine, his personal lucky number.

Millions lost their savings, and something snapped. Ne Win's action underlined how a whole country of 42 million civilised and tolerant people had been hijacked and abused by ignorant thugs in uniform. It was not just the money; it was the humiliation. A new era was dawning in Asia, and Burma was not part of it.

All around were economic miracles, and Asians were learning the techniques of non-violent revolution: the Philippines blazed the democratic trail in 1986, and Thailand, Bangladesh, China and South Korea were hovering on the brink. So the Burmese lost their patience and in 1988 tried to drive the army from power.

Aung San Suu Kyi became the symbolic leader of the democratic revolution because her father, who won Burma's independence from Britain and was assassinated in 1947, is the country's greatest national hero. She became its real leader because she had great courage and political acumen. And though her presence in Burma at the right time was sheer chance, she was ready for her role.

"I only ask one thing," she wrote to Michael Aris before they married: "that should my people need me, you would help me to do my duty by them... If we love and cherish each other as much as we can while we can... love and compassion will triumph in the end."

Suu Kyi has not left Burma since 1988, and she has only seen her husband and sons a few brief times. In September 1988, the army drowned the popular protests in blood; thousands were shot down in the streets. The generals dared not kill Suu Kyi, but they put her under strict house arrest. And then, believing that they had cowed the

public, they held elections in 1990. "They are like a chess player who only thinks one or two moves ahead," Suu Kyi said recently about her tormentors. In 1990, they completely miscalculated: 82 per cent of the Burmese voted for Suu Kyi's party, the National League for Democracy, giving it 392 out of 485 seats. So the generals just arrested most of those elected and annulled the results.

Since then, the Burmese army has doubled in size, to half a million men. It gobbles up over half of the national budget, and takes huge rake-offs from the heroin trade (Burma has become the world's largest producer). But Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, and the generals are hated just as much now as they were five years ago.

Ne Win, now well into his 80s, remains the power behind the scenes. His front men are people of the kind of General Khin Nyunt, the secret police chief whose main contribution to world literature is a tract entitled: "The conspiracy of treasonous minions within (Burma) and traitorous cohorts abroad". They have taken new heart from ASEAN's tacit blessing of their rule, and from the scores of potential foreign investors who come sniffing around in search of quick returns from Burma's oil and timber.

Suu Kyi's house arrest was lifted a year ago as part of the regime's attempt to curry favour with foreign investors. Now every Saturday thousands of Burmese defy the heavy secret police presence and gather outside her father's rundown house in Rangoon to hear her speak, and the regime dares not interfere.

But she is a Mandela without a De Klerk to talk to: the regime does not know how to quit gracefully.

The foreign investors are not helping. As South African Bishop Desmond Tutu, another Nobel Peace Prize winner, said recently: "International pressure can change the situation in Burma. Tough sanctions, not 'constructive engagement', finally brought about a new South Africa. This is the only language that tyrants understand."

But ASEAN never takes stands, and Britain sabotaged a recent European Union attempt to agree on sanctions.

In terms of cruel and incompetent dictators, Burma is right up there with North Korea and Nigeria, but Aung San Suu Kyi does not despair. "There will be change," she explained recently, "because all they have is guns."

LETTERS

In the kitchen or at the helm?

To the Editor:

I STARTED reading the article entitled "Islamic council recommends 19-point plan for economic recovery" (Jordan Times, July 30, 1996) with interest and then dismay.

While I find it commendable that the Council of Islamic Organisations and Societies in Jordan (CIOIS) should take it upon themselves to come up with a programme for the government "to help improve the country's economic situation and help adjust the balance of payments," I see no justifiable reason for them to target women so unjustly in their programme. They do that in point 16, in which they recommend employing males as secretaries for ministers rather than females because "males need the job to support families while a female is supported by her parents or husband."

They add that many secretaries spend their income on "buying non-essential commodities... (and) luxury items. Some of the female secretaries come from wealthy families and only want to kill time at work and so deprive the needy of earning an income."

I must have missed the latest study on ministers' female secretaries and the dispersal of their income, on which CIOIS's last point was based!

The studies that I have read and which were highlighted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing last year showed that women who were granted loans/financial aid tend to reinvest 97 per cent of it into raising the living standard of their families, their children's education, etc., whereas men would invest less than half of that amount into improving their families' well-being. Women are now being cited as a safer credit risk than men, to which the meteoric success of the Grameen Bank attests.

I do not mean in this letter to pit men against women, but I find it both deplorable and disappointing that an economic recovery programme would recommend the removal of women from their jobs for incongruous and unsubstantiated reasons.

The next step, I suppose, would be to suspend education for women (since they are not going to work anyway, what's the use of investing so much money in them?) and leave them at home-pregnant and bare foot in the kitchen.

Nadine Shubailat,
Amman.

Who carries the day?

To the Editor:

CENTURIES AGO, the Muslims create one of the most powerful empires known to mankind. Centuries before that, the Persians had created another such empire along with the Romans, the Greeks and many other civilisations. Centuries' old traditions continue to form the essence of our daily lives in many respects. One such tradition is the Olympic Games.

At first, I did not know what to make of Ali Kassay's magnificent last column "Flaminga games" (Jordan Times, July 31, 1996). I later, however, realised that it was simply a magnificent piece of writing, but obvi-

ously one without any purpose or objective.

One plausible thought that did cross my mind was that he was upset that the ancient Greeks did not classify memorising dictionaries as an Olympic sport, or that their descendants did not include Greek mythology as one either.

What baffled me was that someone with such undoubted sophistication and culture would actually contemplate spending his July evenings in front of a television set, be it in the absence of Olympic coverage or even with the Olympics going on, as seems to be the case. And what baffled me even more was that while claiming that he had no interest whatsoever in either the Olympics or TV coverage of them, Mr. Kassay knows every little detail about the television coverage of these games.

He obviously has something against the Olympics. It simply does not stand to reason to have admirable athletes from around the world competing in the Atlanta Games dismissed by him as idiots who should not even bother. A discipline with millions of obviously "abnormal" enthusiasts around the world was brushed aside by him as nothing but a futile attempt to "heave a large lump of iron upwards..." I suppose one could argue the same about the space shuttle: after all it is nothing but a large lump of metal that hurls itself upwards... Who cares about the discovery of the worlds beyond anyway?

As for those of us who do speak Arabic and may not be terribly conversant with some sports, believe it or not, some of us do appreciate the running commentary by those gentlemen who have spent sleepless nights over the last fortnight to cover the events. Naturally, this does not pass without the occasional mistake or unnecessary remarks. You find this in every television or radio station. I remember watching the England vs. New Zealand rugby match last year when the mighty New Zealander, Jonah Lomu, was in the process of bulldozing half the English team, and the English TV commentator could only come up with: "I hear he has a very low IQ, you know..." as a "brilliant" contribution to the commentary!

I do not know how Mr. Kassay produced his theory that what you see on Channel 2 JTV in terms of almost continuous Olympic coverage is due to budgetary constraints. If anything, it probably shows that JTV has gone slightly over the top on this one.

Finally, for those of us lesser mortals who speak English only as a second language, it might help if the Jordan Times could issue cut-away coupons for dictionaries, so that the masses can find themselves better equipped to read and comprehend this beautiful weekly column. Right now, if I am given the choice between spending my August evenings watching the Olympics or having the Wednesday issue of the Jordan Times shoved under my nose... I am afraid that Suleiman Borjigan and blinding-flash-of-the-obvious commentators would carry the day!

Nasser S. Judeh,
Director, JTV,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Feature

Custom

Wor

Robert Riesel

The treasure has been

PNA court jails

(Continued from page 1)

Features

Customs men get X-ray eyes...

but some say fancy gadgets don't do the intelligence work

By Joseph Finder

IN FUTURE the only way to protect your modesty before boarding a plane may be to wear lead-lined underwear, writes Steve Connor, science correspondent. A new X-ray machine, designed to combat terrorists and drug smugglers, "strip searches" people by producing nude images.

British authorities are studying trials of the device closely, but even a cursory glance reveals its potential as an ogler's delight. Designed to reveal hidden soft objects missed by normal security detectors, the new machine gives a clear picture of whether you are an Adonis or an Aphrodite or not.

"The image is not like seeing something in Playboy magazine. But there is no question you can tell a man from a woman," said Hamer Boynton, a consultant to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), who has assessed the American-made machine. Operators can focus on suspicious details at the touch of a button.

British customs, airports, prisons and the House of Commons are studying the machine, which is a significant advance on current security detectors. The low doses of X-rays produced by the machine are able to penetrate clothing but are partly reflected by the skin. A detector captures the reflected rays, which can then be used to build up a detailed image of the "naked" body.

Hard objects, such as guns and knives, are easily identified, as are non-metallic objects such as bags of cocaine or body belts stuffed with plastic explosives, the weapon favoured by suicide bombers.

Security officials at the Palace of Westminster have studied the device but have so far declined to test it on

visitors, let alone MPs. "I don't think MPs would like their constituents screened in a naked situation," said Matthew Heaton, European director of American Science and Engineering, the machine's manufacturers.

Officials at HM Customs have tested the machine as a possible alternative to strip searching, which has to take place in the presence of a doctor. The only disappointment is that it fails to detect small quantities of drugs hidden inside body orifices.

The customs service and

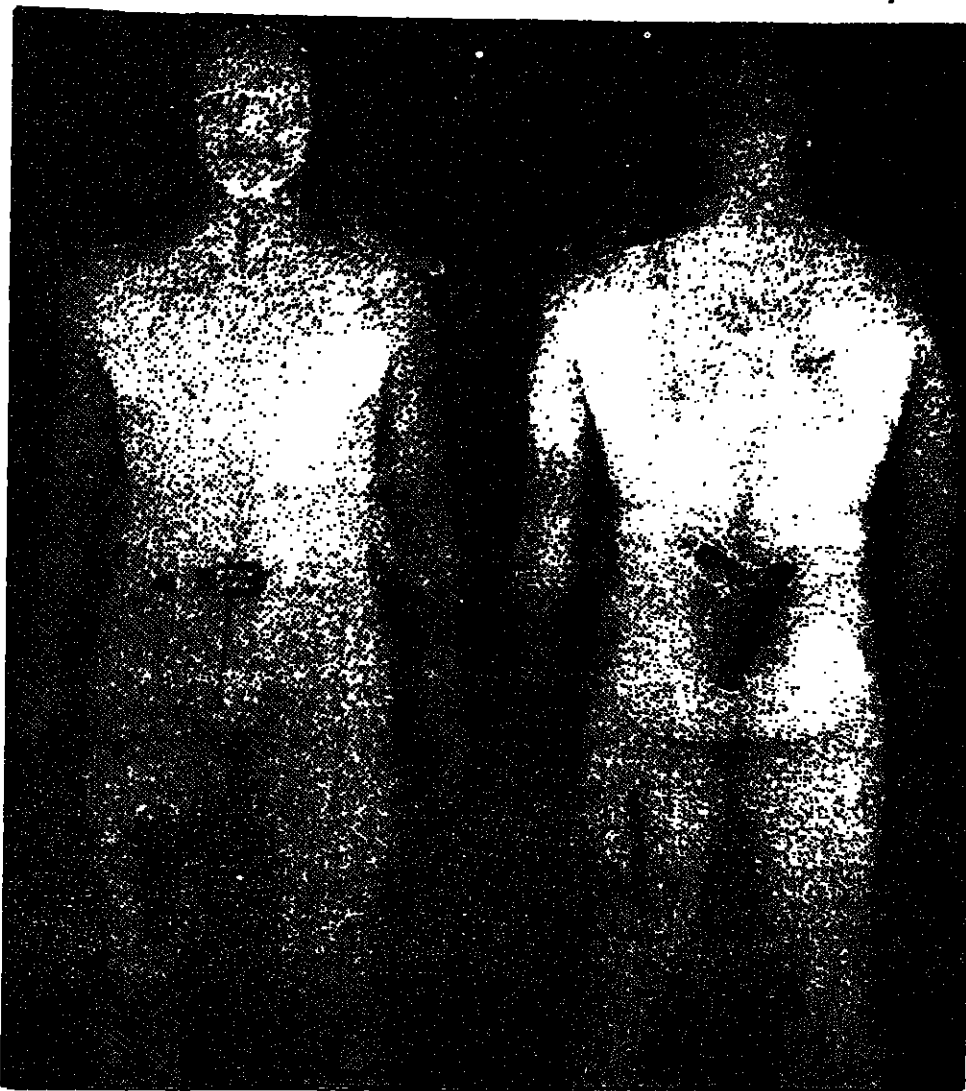
prisons are likely to be the first to use the machine in Britain because of the limitations of existing metal detectors, according to Heaton.

Some American prisons are already using the machine and airports are likely to introduce it within the next few years, according to a report by a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) scientific committee, though questions of privacy will have to be resolved first, particularly as people and incidents filmed by closed-circuit

television security systems have previously been sold on video for entertainment.

Such considerations are less sensitive outside the public services, however. A leading gold merchant is likely to become the first private customer for the machine in Britain, says Heaton. He intends using the device to ensure that gold leaf is not smuggled from his premises.

The Sunday Times



The X-ray security machine strips suspects down

WELLFLEET, Massachusetts — Whether or not the crash of TWA Flight 800 was caused by terrorists, Americans are demanding heightened airport security to ensure against another tragedy. Indeed, security measures at airports must be enhanced, but people are deluding themselves if they think this is the way to prevent terrorist attacks.

Even the most sophisticated luggage scanners are enormously limited. It is not something that airline or law enforcement officials are comfortable talking about, but the million-dollar machines we have been hearing so much about lately — the ones that have been installed in only three American airports — are still of limited value. They may represent an improvement at detecting plastic explosives, but they are unlikely to be reliable at detecting certain other forms of explosives.

These machines, which use a mix of X-ray and CAT-scan technology to generate three-dimensional images of what is inside bags, are programmed to locate substances that have the density of plastic explosives. But many explosive materials, like foams or liquid rocket propellants, have a lower density than plastic, are almost as powerful and can escape detection.

Terrorists will always figure out a way to defeat whatever security measures are put into place.

They always have.

What, then, can be done to prevent attacks? Early warnings of terrorist plots can be provided by good intelligence, but here, too, there are great constraints. It is extremely difficult, sometimes impossible, to penetrate terrorist organisations.

money and patience, and rarely shows results. It is not surprising that in the last decade or so the CIA has cut back drastically on human intelligence. But that is a mistake.

The FBI's counterterrorism abilities are impressive, but without the support of intelligence agencies they will remain ineffectual at preventing terrorist incidents.

"What are terrorists, or would-be terrorists, to make of a nation that retaliates forcefully by bombing Iraq's intelligence headquarters after learning of a plot to assassinate former President George Bush, yet hesitates to go after the Libyan bombers who brought down Pan Am Flight 103?"

There is a role for technical intelligence agencies, chiefly the U.S. National Security Agency and its British equivalent, the government communications headquarters. They are quite skilled at intercepting communications — voice, data, faxes — around the world and combing them for certain "trigger" words in a designated string order.

Such intercepts rely on locating targets, which can be done only by human intelligence. To recruit the people who are well placed to

intelligence agencies they will remain ineffectual at preventing terrorist incidents. Both the CIA's and the Defence Intelligence Agency's counterterrorism abilities remain woefully undeveloped and a low priority. In the CIA, counterterrorism is not an area where many are likely to make a career; the probability of success, after all, is low.

Intelligence insiders complain of being hampered by all manner of bureaucratic problems. We're awfully good at collecting data, they say,

and even better at "briefing" it, but we're weak at putting it into a usable form. Analysts spend far too much time chasing data and not enough time analysing it.

And there is a larger problem. As a people, we Americans tend to react in fits and starts. We lurch from isolationism to the gung-ho patriotism of the Gulf war and back again. What are terrorists, or would-be terrorists, to make of a nation that retaliates forcefully by bombing Iraq's intelligence headquarters after learning of a plot to assassinate former President George Bush, yet hesitates to go after the Libyan bombers who brought down Pan Am Flight 103?

America's is a culture of seat belts and air bags. We believe we have a natural right to a risk-free environment, and we are appalled when the fallacy of that belief is brought home.

We have been astonishingly lucky. Band-Aid measures like the use of more and more sophisticated detection gadgetry may reassure a jittery public, but they are no substitute for facing the multipolar threats of a post-cold war world head-on.

The writer is author of the novel "The Zero Hour". This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

World's oldest tyrannosaurus found in Thailand

By Robert Birsel
Reuters

PHU WIANG, Thailand — Dinosaur bones found in a Thai forest suggest the ferocious tyrannosaurus rex, the king of dinosaurs that stalked prehistoric North America, originated in Asia.

A joint Thai-French team has discovered the fossilised remains of a dinosaur they think is the grandfather of all tyrannosaurs, 20 million years older than the oldest specimen of the fierce, meat-eating dinosaur previously found.

"We have found that many of the characteristics are the same as the tyrannosaurus though more primitive," Thai researcher Varavudh Suteethorn said of the dinosaur.

The creature has been dubbed *siamotyrannus isanensis*, from Thailand's former name, Siam, and the name of the northeastern Isan region of the country where it was found.

"It has more similarities to the tyrannosaurus than any other carnivore, it's the same family," said Mr. Varavudh, Thailand's leading palaeontologist, who works with the industry ministry's Department of Mineral Resources.

The remains of the nearly-complete skeleton, which is about 120 million years old, were found embedded in rock in a forest

in the Phu Wiang National Park in Khon Kaen Province in 1994.

"We think the tyrannosaurus evolved in this area and then dispersed to other areas," Mr. Varavudh told Reuters.

"At that time all the continents were one, they had not separated yet, so we think it dispersed and then after that the continents separated," he said.

The tyrannosaurus rex has been found only in North America and lived some 50 million years after the *siamotyrannus isanensis*.

The Thai creature was about 6.5 metres long, about half the size of the tyrannosaurus rex, reflecting a natural tendency for all animals to grow in size as they evolve, as long as the conditions are right, Mr. Varavudh said.

Though the remains of some 10 different dinosaur species have been discovered in Thailand, most have been herbivorous sauropods — plant-eating dinosaurs which walked on all four legs and had long necks and long tails.

The *siamotyrannus isanensis* is the first near-complete fossilised carnivorous dinosaur found in Thailand. The animal was bipedal, walking mostly on its rear legs with a short neck and short forelegs, good for grabbing and holding prey.

To the disappointment of Mr. Varavudh and his team, the *siamotyrannus isanensis*

is missing its head.

"It's very rare to find a dinosaur head. It's fragile, made of small bones, lightly built and it decays and disappears very easily," Mr. Varavudh said.

The first dinosaur remains were discovered in Thailand by geologists prospecting for uranium in 1976. Systematic searches and excavations by joint Thai-French teams were started in the early 1980s.

Researchers soon realised that the best dinosaur remains in southeast Asia were dotted just below the surface of northeast Thailand.

The relative abundance of dinosaur fossils is not because prehistoric Thailand, covered in simple ferns and fern trees, was a particularly hospitable environment for the animals.

Their remains have survived so well in Thailand, as well as in parts of China and India, because of an accident of geology.

"Only sedimentary rock can preserve fossils," Mr. Varavudh said, adding that such stone is found on, or just below, the top soil, across much of northeast and northern Thailand. "Igneous (volcanic) or metamorphic rock cannot preserve fossils."

In neighbouring Kalasin Province Mr. Varavudh and his team are excavating a site about the size of a tennis court which contains the



Thai researchers examine the fossilised remains of a dinosaur at a jungle site in northeastern Thailand (Reuters photo)

remains of several herbivorous dinosaurs.

Mr. Varavudh said the site must have been a bend in a prehistoric river where the

carcasses of the dead animals drifted and were trapped and quickly covered by layers of silt.

That silt is now rock

which the researchers chip away at with chisels to reveal the fossilised skeletons.

Mr. Varavudh hopes that

one day a museum will be built where the fossils can be pieced together and exhibited but for the time being he and his team continue their digging and their search for more remains on a shoe-string.

"Palaeontology does not get a big budget," he said.

PNA court jails 3 policemen

(Continued from page 1)

After the clashes a fact-finding committee comprised of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leaders and cabinet ministers was established and met on Saturday with community leaders in Tulkarem.

Ibrahim Hadyeh was killed on Friday when some 2,000 protesters stormed a Tulkarem jail freeing 40 Hamas prisoners. The inmates surrendered later in the day to

PNA police after taking part in Hadyeh's funeral, a Hamas official said. The protesters were demanding the release of imprisoned relatives on hunger strike.

The PLO jailed hundreds of Hamas activists after a suicide bombing spree in February and March killed 59 people in Israel. Hamas has spearheaded Palestinian opposition to PLO-Israel peace moves.

Residents said that Palestinian police shot dead Hadyeh.

44, but the Palestinian news agency Wafa quoted an official source saying Hamas gunmen killed the man by opening fire on the crowd and blaming Hamas for instigating the riot.

On Saturday Hamas called for an uprising and renewed attacks against Israel to avenge the two deaths.

Hamas accused the PNA of "selling out to Israeli occupiers" and "depriving Palestinians of their rights" by serving the interests of the Jewish state.

"Hamas considers the events

in Tulkarem and Nablus as the beginning of a popular uprising against the Palestinian Authority," the statement said.

The group rejected Mr. Arafat's charges that it was behind the unrest. It also reiterated its call for the release of its members held in Palestinian jails.

"We call upon our fighters in the Izzeddine Al-Qassam brigades... To strike Zionist targets in response to the crimes of Arafat's authority and his militias," said a Hamas statement.

Aideed's factions spurn Ali Mahdi's peace offer

(Continued from page 1)

"We fight among ourselves and we know what we are doing. But if someone comes and colonises us, it is the worst."

Mr. Kanyare denied Aideed, 62, was assassinated or even shot. His own spokesman said on Friday he died of a heart attack during an operation on wounds after he was shot several times.

"Some people speculated

he was wounded in war and then he died. But that's bullshit. It is not true. We know he died of a heart attack," said Mr. Kanyare, adding that no one was to blame.

Ordinary Somalis were unsure and divided on Saturday over whether Aideed's death increased the chances for an end to war.

"I despair of peace," 26-year-old Asha Mohammad said with bitter resignation from her bed in a north

Mogadishu hospital.

Asha, six months pregnant, was hit by a bullet on July 25 during clashes in the southwest Mogadishu district of Medina, a day after aides said Aideed was shot in fighting in the area.

The round that hit Asha slammed into her uterus, killing her foetus and severing an artery in her upper leg. Surgeons removed the dead foetus and said the mother of three would soon

leave hospital to her husband.

More than 10,000 people, many wailing and weeping, attended the funeral on Friday of their leader and self-declared president, whose rag-tag fighters humiliated the might of the U.S. military in 1993 and pushed U.N. peacekeepers out in 1994.

The "foreign minister" appointed by Aideed blamed the European Union Saturday for all the fighting in Somalia.

French urged to be friendlier to foreigners

PARIS (AFP) — French people must learn to smile more at foreigners if they are to maintain France's status as the world's number one tourist destination, an official report has said.

They must also be more prepared to speak foreign languages and be generally more hospitable, according to the study by the Social and Economic Council (CES).

"It is time to make the French understand their role in making up the image of their country," it warned.

France has 60 million visitors per year, bringing in some 57 billion francs (\$11.4 billion) or 9.4 per cent of GDP, employing some one million people across the country.

But amid a strong franc and a spate of terrorist attacks, the tourist industry has stagnated over the last four years, ringing alarm bells in the French treasury.

CES rapporteur Fernand Chassebois, reporting the results of a survey of foreigners' views of visits to France, said that French people were "smug, self-important and not very hospitable."

One key area for improvement is hygiene in public places, which was highlighted as a cause for concern for many foreign visitors, according to the study.

The French authorities are also weak on self-promotion, it said, noting that the country had an annual tourism advertising budget of only 138 million francs (\$27 million), two and half times less than Britain, nine times less than Spain and 20 times less than Ireland.

The Disneyland Paris Theme Park east of Paris spends almost as much on promoting itself as the entire French state, it said.

According to a recent study, the number of European tourists visiting France has slumped in the last year, and they are spending less when they get here.

Britons are among the top countries shunning the country, with nearly 10 per cent fewer crossing the English Channel in July than in the same month last year, according to the report by 100 tourfices.

Dubai bets on business boom from Iraq's oil-for-food deal

DUBAI (AFP) — Dubai, the Gulf's trade hub, expects a boom in business when Iraq gets the green light to start buying food and medicine under its oil-for-food deal with the United Nations.

Officials and company presidents told AFP that Dubai will play a major role as a way station for goods sent to Iraq.

"Instead of making orders (elsewhere) and waiting for them, they will be able to take direct delivery of the goods" from Dubai, said Ahmad Al Banna, director of research at the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"You find all kinds of goods in Dubai and at competitive prices. Dubai traders import in large

quantities," Mr. Banna said. In 1995, around \$20 billion in non-oil goods were imported, exported or re-exported from Dubai.

Dubai, one of the seven member states of the United Arab Emirates, "has huge warehouses, ports and an airport allowing it to meet the demands of neighboring countries," he said.

"In the past there was trade between Iraq and Dubai and these ties will without doubt be reestablished if there is a total or partial lifting of the embargo" imposed on Baghdad after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, he said.

Iraq has already contacted Dubai about the easing of the embargo, rearing two tug boats from the Dubai-based Mubarak Shipping

Company needed to help ships move through the main Iraqi ports at Umm Qasr and Basra.

"The two tugs have arrived in Iraq," according to the company's director, Jumaa Mubarak, who added that his firm was "ready to transport goods to this country when the (oil-for-food) accord is finalized."

He said that Dubai-based transport companies will have a big role to play in shipping goods to Iraq even if the imports come from other cities, since the emirate is the regional hub for the world's freighters.

Dubai and its free zone at Jebel Ali, the largest in the Middle East, serve other countries in the region with large cargo ships and traditional wooden dhows.

This suits Iraq which "lacks transfer facilities in its ports," which were damaged during the 1991 Gulf war and deprived of equipment because of the embargo, Mr. Mubarak said.

Iraqi merchants have continued to visit Dubai to buy goods which are exempt from the U.N. embargo.

"They sometimes come to buy \$100,000 or \$200,000 of sugar and load it on a dhow bound for Iraq after getting approval from the U.N. sanctions surveillance committee office in Bahrain," said Jamal Al Ghurair, president of the Khaleej Sugar Company.

The company's refinery in Jebel Ali produces 2,400 tonnes of sugar per day, with 60 per cent exported to neighbouring countries.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET									
DUBAI FINANCIAL MARKET									
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 03/08/1996									
PRICE 17	PRICE 18	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OFFER PRICE	CHANGE
250.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	11.8	1.67	5	300	108320	216.75	1.75
4.700	4.250	CHIEF JORDAN BANK	9.1	3.35	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
2.700	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	4.9	2.46	1	2100	8210	4.80	-
5.840	5.250	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
3.040	2.500	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
1.240	900	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
4.180	3.700	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
4.200	3.700	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
3.670	3.240	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
1.080	1.000	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
1.680	1.000	JOR. TRADING BANK	11.8	2.14	1	3800	9480	4.80	-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS									
4.430	4.000	JORDANIAN BANK	11.4	4.76	3	900	840	4.20	-
2.910	2.150	JOR. TRADING BANK	6.4	8.80	2	900	2180	2.23	0.02
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS									
1.230	1.150	JORDANIAN INSUR.	12.15	0.00	5	9900	27660		
1.900	1.450	JOR. ELECTRICITY	10.4	8.00	21	13662	20577	1.50	1.90
2.720	2.280	JOR. TRADING BANK	12.0	5.71	1	100	245	2.42	0.03
6.080	4.850	JOR. TRADING BANK	17.0	9.08	10	10356	68990	6.80	5.00
2.270	1.080	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.3	9.08	1	2300	10668	4.50	2.21
1.430	950	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.3	9.08	1	2300	10668	4.50	2.21
2.430	1.700	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.3	9.08	1	2300	10668	4.50	2.21
1.200	820	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.3	9.08	1	2300	10668	4.50	2.21
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS									
27.100	18.950	JOR. TRADING BANK	20.5	2.96	2	389	9104	24.15	2.36
3.810	3.050	JOR. TRADING BANK	19.0	3.22	16	10322	32315	3.12	3.14
3.950	2.750	JOR. TRADING BANK	29.2	0.00	4	493	1333	3.77	3.71
10.810	8.720	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.3	0.00	30	1164	10711	9.50	9.23
8.150	6.430	JOR. TRADING BANK	8.8	3.63	30	1164	10711	9.50	9.23
5.210	3.150	JOR. TRADING BANK	25.2	5.70	93	27028	94017	3.35	3.31
9.000	4.250	JOR. TRADING BANK	12.7	4.00	4	2300	10668	4.50	2.21
5.800	3.120	JOR. TRADING BANK	8.4	8.88	7	1138	3856	3.35	3.30
1.740	1.450	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	48	78100	38654	5.50	5.22
1.500	1.000	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.7	8.00	23	14900	18475	6.42	6.28
2.720	2.110	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	4	441	976	1.28	1.28
1.210	1.050	JOR. TRADING BANK	9.9	8.96	1	100	67	0.67	0.67
1.660	1.350	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	8	900	886	1.19	0.88
4.850	3.850	JOR. TRADING BANK	17.7	0.00	2	400	1360	3.00	2.90
1.560	1.350	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	8	900	886	1.19	0.88
2.220	1.080	JOR. TRADING BANK	97.3	0.00	27	12700	18920	3.45	3.48
1.820	1.250	JOR. TRADING BANK	91.7	5.17	3	580	628	1.18	1.16
3.410	1.760	JOR. TRADING BANK	4.8	10.42	16	7300	14035	1.82	1.92
2.170	1.140	JOR. TRADING BANK	18.0	0.00	20	6410	7167	1.40	1.42
1.800	980	JOR. TRADING BANK	27.4	0.00	9	2817	2643	1.02	1.01
2.440	1.750	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	2	2400	4612	1.88	1.88
1.490	1.090	JOR. TRADING BANK	27.8	0.00	12	8150	7757	1.10	1.18
2.210	1.110	JOR. TRADING BANK	28.8	0.00	2	450	828	1.16	1.17
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS									
104.07	104.07	JORDANIAN BANK	104.07	0.00	332	173398	286558		
GRAND TOTAL									
126.50	126.50	JORDANIAN BANK	126.50	0.00	473	258954	570768		
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 03/08/1996									
510	510	CENTRAL BANK	22.9	0.00	5	2950	1678	54	57.03
610	610	JOR. TRADING BANK	16.8	0.00	3	1000	830	62	62.03
950	950	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	2	889	179	179	179.03
990	990	UNION TRV. 501	67.0	0.00	18	66700	13340	71	66.01
1.230	1.230	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	13	7600	4337	56	56.02
970	970	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	4	2250	957	57	57.01
1.800	1.370	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	7	4200	6006	1.44	1.43
1.100	1.100	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	9	8434	5597	64	64.01
1.000	1.000	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	8	2250	1795	80	79.01
940	940	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	2	900	405	46	45.01
970	970	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	6	7350	2814	63	63.01
1.710	1.100	JOR. TRADING BANK	1.100	0.00	3	617	1.14	1.15	1.15.01
880	880	JOR. TRADING BANK	35.1	0.00	37	28150	18953	88	87.02
1.480	1.480	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	5	1250	988	79	79.01
970	970	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	2	1000	445	45	44.01
1.800	1.800	JOR. TRADING BANK	9	0.00	63	58550	60239	75	72.02
5.500	3.900	JOR. TRADING BANK	10.6	6.41	1	1000	2390	2.99	2.90
GRAND TOTAL									
105	105	JORDANIAN BANK	105	0.00	105	23140	115636		

* New 12 months low
* Stock dividend during the past 12 months
* Listed during the past 12 months
* P/E ratio in 100 of new
* Negative P/E
* Betting 1/4 share or 1/4 for the most recent year

DAILY BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordanian pharmaceutical products to be given priority by Algeria

Investments reach JD253m during first six months of 1996

**** ALGERIA HAS** decided to support the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry by offering more facilities to Jordanian producers. According to Algerian trade Minister Abdel Karim Hashrawi, officials from Jordanian pharmaceutical companies will visit Algeria to assess needs and investment opportunities. The minister said that there are pharmaceutical industries in Algeria that produce medicines needed by Jordan. Mr. Hashrawi described the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry as "advanced in production and quality" as well as adhering to international specifications. He explained that Algeria imports \$500 million of medicines each year from Europe but the priority will now be given to imports from Jordan (Al Aswaq).

**** INVESTMENTS DURING** the first six months of this year exceed the total recorded for the whole of 1995. According to sources at the Investment Promotion Corporation, 171 new projects benefited from the investment promotion law during the first six months of 1996. Industries accounted for largest portion with 138 projects followed by hotels (25), agriculture (7), hospitals (5) and one project in the maritime and railways sector. The total investment of the project was nearly JD 253 million, 63 per cent of which was for the industrial sector. The percentage of investments in the other sectors were: Hotels (16.8 per cent), agriculture (6.68 per cent), hospitals (7.49 per cent) and the transport sector (0.03 per cent). The foreign share of the total investment amounted to JD51 million or about 20 per cent of the total (Al Dustour).

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	SLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.4775	0.8485	1.2005	106.80	1.3740	1518.00	1.8567	6.0140	
DEM	0.6785	1.0000	0.6320	63.20	0.6005	6.5563	0.7361	2.3637	
GB Sterling	1.5420	1.5420	1.0000	77.25	1.5581	164.75	2.1187	2.3377	2.6548
CHF Franc	0.7530	0.7530	0.6063	1.0000	0.6005	6.5563	0.7361	2.3637	2.6548
JP Yen	0.0094	1.3821	0.8063	1.1230	1.0000	1.2862	14.18	164.98	4.8904
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9745	0.4274	0.0782	1420.86	0.9089	1.0000	10.93	3.3070
FR Franc	0.1994	0.2946	0.1292	23.8352	21.28	0.2742	33.03	53.0300	

Energy

Oil	USD	DEM	Previous
Brent	20.40	20.05	
WTI	20.40	20.05	
Bony	20.40	20.05	
UL Gas	196.00	196.00	

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2688	0.3841	0.17282	0.32037	28.5038
AE Dirham	0.2740	0.40251	0.17882	0.32772	29.1121
KW Dirham	3.3468	4.8456	2.16887	4.01820	337.684
Oman Rial	0.2710	0.39005	0.17705	0.31975	28.5038
CY Pound	2.1686	3.2641	1.4054	2.8034	231.607

Metal Prices

Metal	USD	DEM	Offer
Gold (oz)	386.75	387.25	
Platinum (oz)	402.3	403.3	
Al (3 Months)	1570	1570	
CU (3 Months)	1935	1940	
Zinc (3 Months)	1035	1035	
Lead (3 Months)	800	805	
Ni (3 Months)	8670	8690	

Currency Deposit Rates (Bld)

Period	1 - 3	3 - 6	6 - 9	9 - 12
USD	5.31	5.43	5.52	5.78
JPY	0.57	0.71	0.75	0.78
DEM	5.31	5.43	5.52	5.78
FRF	3.58	3.65	3.75	3.83
ITL	5.58	5.40	5.28	5.21

Main Equity Indices

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Chg
New York	DOW JONES	5879.83	85.08	1.52	5879.83	5852.54	5594.75
London	FT-SE 100	3770.5	36.2	0.97	3770.7	3734.1	

Carl Lewis could miss 10th gold

ATLANTA (R) — Carl Lewis' chances of winning his career and the troubled Olympics with a unique 10th gold medal hung in the balance Friday and Nigerian long jumper Chioma Ajunwa scored one of the biggest upsets of the games.

Exactly a week after a crude pipe bomb blasted a vicious shrapnel of screws and nails through crowds attending a rock concert in Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park, it was briefly evacuated because of a suspicious package. Police said it turned out to be a false alarm.

Hundreds of relatives, friends and officials attended funeral services for Alice Hawthorne, 44, who died in the park bomb blast after being hit by shrapnel. A Turkish cameraman also died and 110 people were hurt.

There was still no sign of arrests or charges in the bombing, despite searches of current and former homes of a private security guard who is the only known suspect.

In the long jump, Ajunwa came back from a four-year ban for doping to give Nigeria its first ever gold, less than two months after returning to competition. She took the scalps of for-

mer Olympic champion Jackie Joyner-Kersey and world champion Fiona May.

Kenya continued its 12-year domination of the 3,000 metres steeplechase but in surprise fashion, when Joseph Keter beat world record holder and champion Moses Kiptanui.

There was a shock in the tennis too where American Lindsay Davenport upset world number three Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the women's final.

Great athletics performances could erase much of the memory of the problems that have dogged the Olympics and after Michael Johnson's breathtaking 200 metres world record, a 10th gold medal for Carl Lewis would give the games a glamorous finale.

American coaches said they were keeping their options open on whether to include Lewis in the team for the 4x100 metres relay final Saturday and give him a chance of an unprecedented 10th gold.

But asked if Lewis should be included, team captain Dennis Mitchell replied: "I don't think at this point we need him."

Services for bomb victim Hawthorne were held in Albany, south of Atlanta where she lived, and Douglasville, where she grew up.

In Douglasville, the preacher led prayers for the victim of the bomber and in Albany a letter was read from President Bill Clinton vowing to catch the bombers.

The Albany service was attended by Hawthorne's 14-year-old daughter Fallon who was injured in the blast.

Johnson, whose astonishing performance in the 200 metres Thursday was the defining moment of the Olympics, withdrew from the 4x400 metres relay after straining his right hamstring, losing his chance of a third gold after the unique 200 and 400 double.

The U.S. 400 relay team went on in the semifinal to clock the fastest time run in the United States and looked set for gold.

Germany's sailing crew, skippered by veteran Jochen Schuemann, captured the final gold of the Olympic yachting regatta.

But in another brickbat against the organisers, yachting's governing body, the International Yacht Racing Union (IYRU) slammed Olympic officials for staging the events at Wassaw Sound near Savannah. The inaccessible location was a logistical nightmare for competitors, spectators and the media.



Chioma Ajunwa of Nigeria is shown as she competes in the finals of the women's long jump competition, winning the gold medal on Aug. 2 at the Olympic stadium in Atlanta. The gold is the first Olympics long jump title for Nigeria (Reuters photo)



Olympics schedule

SUNDAY, AUGUST 4

ATHLETICS	single and double, Women's kayak single and double
Men's marathon	
BASKETBALL	EQUESTRIAN
Women's gold and bronze medal	Individual jumping, semifinals and finals
BOXING	RHYTHMIC GYM-NASTICS
Flyweight, featherweight, light welterweight, light middleweight, light heavyweight, super heavyweight finals	Individual finals
CANOE-KAYAK	TEAM HANDBALL
500 finals	Men's gold and bronze medal match
Men's kayak and canoe	VOLLEYBALL
	Men's gold and bronze medal match



Joseph Keter of Kenya celebrates as he crosses the finish line after winning the gold medal in the men's 3,000-metre steeplechase event on Aug. 2 at the Olympic stadium in Atlanta (Reuters photo)

TV's Olympic coverage on Channel 2 for Sunday

Athletics men's marathon	13:55 - 17:15
Canoeing finals	15:55 - 18:15
Equestrian finals	16:55 - 19:30
Handball men's final	19:30 - 21:20
Rhythmic gymnastics	19:55 - 22:15
Boxing finals	20:25 - 23:00
Equestrian ind. jump	20:55 - 22:45
Volleyball men's final	21:20 - 23:45
Basketball ladies final	01:25 - 03:40
Closing ceremony	03:55 - 06:59

Boys from the hood find it tough going against Cuban machine

ATLANTA (AFP) — In the end the raw talent of the boys from the hood wasn't enough to match it with the Cuban boxing machine at the Olympics.

Years of professional poaching have emptied the reserves of once bountiful amateur talent that the United States could by right call upon.

The U.S. may have the most Olympic gold with 46 going into the Atlanta tournament, but since the fabulous seven-gold medal haul at Los Angeles in 1984, the Americans have won just four golds going into the Atlanta finals.

Cuba, even after boycotting the 1984 and 1988 Seoul Games, have 13 golds at their last two Olympic competitions, six in Moscow in 1980 and seven at the last Barcelona Games. They have 19 in total.

By any measure the gap between the Caribbean powerhouses and the U.S. has widened, if gauged by performances leading up to the Atlanta finals.

The gulf was underlined when one of American featherweight Floyd Mayweather shaded Lorenzo Aragon 12-11 on points in the quarter-finals.

Nineteen year old Mayweather's win was the first by a U.S. boxer over a Cuban opponent since Leon Spinks stopped Sixto Soria in the light heavyweight final at the 1976 Montreal Games.

Cuba, who take ideological glee in beating Americans in the ring, especially by knockout, have won 13 of 19 bouts against the U.S.

The Americans may talk up a good fight, while the Cubans shun publicity, but in essence the substance was not there for head coach Al Mitchell and his group of minority miscreants.

Much was made before the Olympics of the dubious character references of Mitchell's troupe and the refusal of host broadcaster NBC to consign boxing coverage to delayed highlights screened in the early

hours of the morning in deference to its female audience.

That seemed incongruous given the parallels of American boxing icons, Muhammad Ali and Evander Holyfield's presence at the Atlanta opening ceremony, indeed the ailing Muhammad Ali was deemed the American athlete considered appropriate enough to light the Olympic flame.

Discipline was always going to be a handful for taskmaster Mitchell.

The boxers' backgrounds symbolise the endemic modern-day pressures of crime-ridden U.S. big city life.

Super heavyweight Lawrence Clay-Bey, a warder, has been accused of sexual assault, heavyweight Nate Jones has spent time for armed robbery, light-heavyweight Antonio Tarver is a reformed crack addict, light middleweight David Reid had allegations of assault dropped by his girlfriend just before the games and Floyd Mayweather's father is inside

convicted of cocaine trafficking.

Mitchell has always worked under the spectre of promoters sitting ringside ready to plunder more of his young team and further diminishing the pool of amateur talent.

He has had motivational problems with several of his youngsters; on one occasion enraged assistant coach Jesse Ravelo punched a hole in a wall trying to get world champion Tarver, distracted by outside interests, to focus on the job at hand.

Other boxers have disregarded advice from their corner and paid the price in points decisions and the sporting behaviour of some of the beaten Americans has left a lot to be desired in comparison with other nations, significantly Cuba.

Those who said the Cubans were too old were off beam — Felix Savon, Ariel Hernandez, Hector Vinent and Juan Hernandez, are still winning and the team has shown little instability

even following the defection of Olympic champion Joel Casamayor and world champion Ramon Garbey before the Olympics.

The computer scoring system, adopted at the Barcelona Olympics in a search for equitable results, has annoyed boxers and fans alike with those adept at manipulating the computer with jabs and straight punches preferred to the more popular all-action fighters.

When Tongan super heavyweight Paea Wolfgram upset the odds with a pulsating win over Cuban Rubalcaba Alexis in the quarter-finals he became an instant hero, with the Americans shouting 'Tonga, Tonga.'

It's a shame when Wolfgram's refreshing natural performance is the exception rather than the rule in the controlled world of amateur boxing.

Atlanta clutter draws comparison with L.A.

ATLANTA (R) — Eccentric Californians staged the nihilist games in Los Angeles 12 years ago because they felt the real Olympics were getting too serious.

The souvenir T-shirt depicted an athlete putting the shot — but the shot had a smoking fuse.

It seemed funny at the time, but the Olympic joke went sour last week when a real bomb in Atlanta's Centennial Park left two dead and over 100 injured.

The bombing drew inevitable comparisons with the 1972 Munich Olympic massacre in which 11 Israeli athletes were murdered by Palestinian guerrillas.

But in most other respects the general style of the Atlanta Games bears much

closer resemblance to the commercial hype and vulgarity of the Los Angeles Olympics.

The dollar bill reigns supreme in Atlanta as it did in Los Angeles.

The 1984 nihilist games also staged a marathon over a distance of one yard (metre) because it seemed silly to run further.

That also carried an echo from the 1972 Olympics in which an impostor "won" the marathon and then said he had devised the hoax because the games had become too serious.

When Atlanta was bidding for the games it knew the mandarins of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had been less than thrilled at the extent to

which Los Angeles — the only candidate for 1984 after the costly mistakes of Montreal in 1976 — had had them over a barrel.

Fearing it might be tarred with the Los Angeles brush, Atlanta deliberately set out to create the impression that the city was somehow separate from the rest of the United States.

But instead of the seductive southern charm they had been led to expect, visitors to the Georgia capital have been wading knee deep in the "commercial clutter" which has drawn frowns of disapproval from the IOC.

Paradoxically, the Olympic Park bombing has done much to subdue earlier criticism of Atlanta's lackadaisical

cal transport and dysfunctional technology.

In the face of death, it seemed curiously to moan about late buses and hiccupping computers.

After the bombing, Atlantans quickly got their show back on the road and earned virtually universal acclaim for their strength of purpose.

By contrast, the 1972 killings resulted in recriminations against the police who, some claimed, had helped precipitate Israeli deaths in a gun battle at a military airport outside Munich after sharpshooters killed three of the Palestinian guerrillas.

But the biggest contrast of all concerns the style of Atlanta itself by comparison

with Barcelona, the Olympic hosts four years ago.

Atlanta knew it could never measure up to the beauty, flair and vivacity of the Catalan capital. Few cities could. Instead, it set out to offer a modern, efficient games and demonstrate the best of southern culture.

Rampant commercialism and technological failures have largely distorted that goal.

But as the games entered their closing phase it seemed likely that outstanding sporting memories and abiding sympathy for the victims of the bomb would rescue Atlanta's image in the eyes of the world.

TODAY AT	CINEMA PHILADELPHIA TEL: 634144 Michael Douglas & Annette Bening ... in The American President Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA PLAZA TEL: 699238 Adel Imam stars in Sleeping in Honey (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 Toy Story 5:00 p.m.	CINEMA CONCORD TEL: 677420 CONCORD "1" Jim Carrey & Jeff Daniels Dumb and Dumber Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" BRAVEHEART Shows: 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	Amman Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimeh & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Nisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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Sports

U.S. win synchronised swimming team gold

ATLANTA (R) — The United States, scoring a battery of perfect 10s in their free routine, won the synchronised swimming team title Friday.

The Americans scored five 10s out five for technical merit and four 10s and a 9.9 from the Swiss judge for artistic impression, computed to a maximum 100 points with top and bottom scores deducted.

The U.S. had also finished first in Tuesday's technical programme and

swept the first Olympic synchro team title by a comfortable margin, their victory never in doubt and a source of rapture to home fans at the Georgia Tech pool.

Canada took the silver and Japan the bronze in a repeat of the medal order of the last two world championships.

The solo and duet events, which formed the Olympic synchro programme at the last three games, were dropped for Atlanta and the

team event brought in. The Americans have won the world championship team title five times out of seven.

The Americans, who included 1994 world solo champion Becky Dyroen-Lancer in their eight-woman team, amassed 99.720 points in the final classification, which combines 35 per cent of the technical programme marks and 65 per cent of the free routine.

Canada scored 98.367 and Japan 97.753.

France caused a furore in the run-up to the games with a free routine based on the Nazi holocaust which French Sports Minister Guy Druet forced them to abandon.

They substituted a different score, including original music which Jean-Michel Collet spent 15 days and nights composing, according to team officials.

A psychologist was brought in to work with the swimmers, who had to master technical changes in their routine just a few weeks before the Olympics began.

The French octet finished fifth, one place behind Russia.

The U.S. free routine included music by Benjamin Britten, Antonio Vivaldi and Claude Debussy and a finale of American traditional fare, Yankee Doodle and America The Beautiful.

Canada's team featured Sylvie Frechette, at 29 the oldest competitor, who was belatedly awarded 1992 Olympic solo gold to match that of her American rival following a mix-up over the marking in Barcelona which had made her second.

The U.S. and Canada have won all the Olympic golds and silvers between them. Japan has taken all the bronzes.



Members of USA's synchronised swim team react as they learn that they won the gold medal with a score of 99.722 on Aug. 2 during the Atlanta Centennial Olympic Games (Reuter photo)



The Canadian synchronised swim team performs on Aug. 2 in the Georgia Tech pool during the Olympic Summer Games in Atlanta. Canada scored 98.36 and won the silver medal behind the U.S. (Reuter photo)

Flops and failures tumble into the Olympic chasm

ATLANTA (AFP) — Measured in micro-seconds, the gap between winning and losing might not look so wide.

But the yawning chasm of defeat in Atlanta has swallowed thousands of high hopes and dreams.

Judging by the tears and heartbreak, taking part is not as much fun as Baron Pierre de Couberton claimed when he created the modern Olympics 100 years ago.

But the defeated can still leave their mark, if only measured by the magnitude of their failure.

Take Linford Christie. The defending champion disqualified for two false starts in the men's 100m was so startled that Donovan Bailey of Canada had to win the race by a world record to get any attention at all.

Legions of stars followed Christie to defeat. Sonia O'Sullivan of Ireland, the world's top women 5000m runner, lost two possible golds to a bad stomach, while Sergei Bubka, the polevault legend, never jumped because of a bad ankle.

Hassiba Boulmerka of Algeria, the world and Olympic champion, tripped up in her heat and failed to reach the final. Others like Marlene Ottey of Jamaica, came second. The greatest woman sprinter never to have won an Olympic title, Ottey lost the 100m sprint on a photo finish to Gail Devers of the United States and the 200m gold to French runner Marie Jose Perec.

"I admire Marlene so much and it bothered me that I had beaten her," said the French 400m specialist who did the 200-400m double.

It also bothered the Brazilians that Nigeria had knocked them out of the Olympic soccer tournament. Brazil, the greatest footballing nation in the world, lost in the semi-finals and police are searching for somebody who was so upset he firebombed the Nigerian embassy in Brasilia.

In shooting, world champion Wang Yifu of China had the gold medal in his grasp. He misfired on his final shot in 10m pistol, then staggered by heat, and

heartache, he fainted. Petra Horneber of Germany threw away the gold medal with her very last shot in the women's rifle. She led throughout the competition then found victory more impossible to handle than defeat. She said "my nerve cracked."

Vitaly Scherbo, heralded as one of the greatest gymnasts ever seen, left Atlanta white with rage. He won six Olympic gold medals in Barcelona four years ago, but won just three bronze medals here. He was unable to accept the truth.

The 24-year-old from Belarus, who now lives in the United States, is no longer that good. He deprived his team of the bronze medal when he fell off the pommel horse. He blamed the judges for his misfortune.

Badminton's Indonesia's stars were denied by Poul-Erik Hoyer-Larsen of Denmark. He accounted for defending champion Allan Budi Kusuma and world champion Heryanto Arbi on his way to the men's title.

A broken racket took care of Susi Susanti, the most

successful women of modern times. She lost her title when she was beaten in the semis by Bang Soo-Hyun of South Korea. She had to replace her racket early on and never recovered.

In weightlifting Belarus former Olympic champion Leonid Taranenko put his back out in the warm up minutes before the competition for the super heavy-weight title and could not even lift his kit bag.

Marcus Stephen, the 1990 and 1994 Commonwealth champion from the tiny central Pacific island of Nauru, left without making one lift. He failed three times to snatch 120 kilograms and crashed out of the competition.

China's swimmers flopped. The team that swept 12 of the 16 gold medals at the world championships in 1994 only managed one here. In the intervening two years Chinese swimming has been turned upside down following revelations of widespread doping. In Atlanta only Le Jingyi won a gold in the 100m freestyle while 100m backstroke world record holder He Chong failed to qualify.

IOC vice-president's wife has a brush with the law

ATLANTA (R) — The wife of International Olympic Committee (IOC) Vice-President Dick Pound made a brief appearance before an Atlanta court Friday following a street altercation in which a policewoman was kned in the groin.

Julie Pound, a 56-year-old Canadian, was ordered to appear for a formal hearing on Aug. 26 on charges

including simple battery, obstruction and using abusive language.

She left the courtroom immediately afterwards without uttering a word. Her husband, a swimming finalist for Canada in the 1960 Rome Olympics who now sits on the IOC's ruling Executive Board, was not present.

The charges stem from an incident early Wednesday morning when Mrs. Pound and her husband tried to cross a busy downtown street against the instructions of traffic police-woman Leanne Browning.

Mrs. Browning's arrest report said Mrs. Pound had the "odour of alcohol on her breath and continued to act irrationally." It said Mrs. Pound had used foul

language on her when she was asked four times to stay on the sidewalk.

When the officer finally grabbed Mrs. Pound's arm to put her under arrest, the woman allegedly responded by kneeling her in the groin. Both the officer and Mrs. Pound suffered minor injuries in the scuffle.

Atlanta says 'bye y'all' to the Olympic Games

ATLANTA (R) — Without a trace of self-doubt, Atlanta promised the "best games in history." On Sunday, it finds out exactly how close it got.

In a raucous and rocking closing ceremony, the city will holler a Georgia-style "bye y'all" to the centenary Olympic Games and to the athletes who brought it to life.

And Juan Antonio Samaranch, like a Roman emperor at the coliseum, will deliver his verdict.

These have been the biggest games ever, the brashiest, certainly among the most dramatic. Nothing so big has hit the American south since the civil war.

But have they been the best? Only International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Samaranch, keeper of the traditional closing-night accolade, will be able to bestow that honour.

The crowds have been enormous — more people have attended sporting events than at the last two summer Olympics combined.

But Atlanta's overall Olympic experience has been, at best, bitter-sweet and Samaranch is unlikely to pretend otherwise.

There were the glitches: Rowing competitors had to hijack a bus to get to their venues on time, a costly computer results system failed to deliver the goods IOC officials complained

of commercial "clutter" marring the look of the games.

Then tragedy struck in Centennial Olympic Park when a crude pipe bomb spewed screws and nails at a crowd of revellers in the heart of the brash Olympic street party.

Two people died and 110 were injured in what President Bill Clinton branded an "evil act of terror."

All agreed the show must go on, however, and it did. Atlanta hauled the games back on track.

By tradition, closing ceremonies are always less formal than the show that marks the start of 16 days of competition. Each of the 197 teams will send only

six people into the athletes' parade so there should be none of the interminable march-pasts that delayed the lighting of the Olympic flame on July 19.

The American flag will be raised alongside that of Greece. The Australian city of Sydney, which hosts the next summer games in 2000, will be handed the Olympic flag.

Beyond that, the show's details are being kept secret. President Clinton was not planning to come.

At the end of the night, whatever Samaranch says, the people of Atlanta will go to bed sure that they gave the world the best Olympic games in history.

Iranian leader: Wrestling victory humilates U.S.

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's president on Saturday hailed an Iranian wrestler who won a gold medal at the Olympics in Atlanta, saying he had rubbed the United States' nose in the dirt.

"The flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran was raised in the house of Satan through the resolve of a pious youth, Rasull Khadem, despite all the mischief by the Americans to prevent this historic event in Atlanta," Rafsanjani said in a speech broadcast by Iranian Radio.

He praised the victory by light-heavyweight Rasull Khadem Azghadi on Friday as a message from God to the world's despots.

"I congratulate your excellence and our nation for rubbing the nose of America in the dirt and for beating the nine-medalled Russian champion. Victory against two superpowers in a single exhibition," he said.

The speech was monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Tehran's hostile relations with Washington have grown more tense following comments by U.S. Defence Secretary

William Perry on Friday that Iran was a leading suspect in the bombing of a U.S. military facility in Saudi Arabia in June.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
The UNDP Resident Representative in Jordan, Mr. Jorgen Lissner, regrets to announce that the official launch of UNDP's 1996 Human Development Report, originally scheduled to take place at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 4, 1996 under the patronage of HRH Princess Basma, has been postponed.
It will be held instead on Monday August 26, 1996 at 11:00 a.m. at Regency Palace Hotel.
Any inconvenience caused by this change is sincerely regretted.

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